

PAPER MAYHEM™

"The Informative Play By Mail Magazine"

Issue #43

July/August 1990

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INSIDE!
Adventurer Kings
Death & Sorrow
Venom
And Much More



7th
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Issue

The
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July/Aug 1990

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COMING IN ISSUE #44

Epic Kings Space Combat And Much More!

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Play By Mail gaming is as the title says, playing games through mail. You achieve this by filling out a turn sheet for a game and mailing it back to its respective company. The company will then process your turn and the other players turns that are in your game and send them back to you, so that you can make your next move.

PBM Games vary in the size of the games, turn around time, length of time a game lasts, and prices. An average PBM game has 10-20 players in it, but there are also games that have hundreds of players. Turn around time is the length of time it takes to get your turn back from a company. The average turnaround time is 2 weeks. Some games never end. They can go on virtually forever or until you decide to drop. Many games have victory conditions that can be achieved within a year or less. Prices vary for the different PBM games, but the average price per turn is about \$4.00.

WHERE WE'RE HEADING

It has been seven years and Paper Mayhem is still going strong! We are still growing and with the input that you the readers keep giving us, we keep changing to meet your needs. We are trying to do some more changes and with the added workload, we are getting to the point where we may need some additional help. For now just bear with us.

We usually try to do something different with each anniversary issue and have done a full color cover with this one. We hope that you appreciate the cover, I know I do. We don't plan on making it a habit, since it is more expensive to do, but we wanted to give you the readers a present. Thanks to Steve Crompton we have made this issue special.

This issue doesn't have a letters section in it. It seems as though more of the letters have been going into the PBM Forum section, since they are more in a debate type format. We are in the planning

stages of getting a few more columns or sections that will help add to the diversity of Paper Mayhem. Any suggestions are welcome.

Enclosed is our 6th Annual Paper Mayhem Awards & Survey. This is so you the readers can vote on your favorite game, company, and moderator. This is just a popularity contest that we run each year, so make sure you send in your votes. The 6th Annual Awards is different from our ratings system. The Survey helps us figure out our demographics and also gives you a chance to give your two cents to help make Paper Mayhem better. This year we will be adding an issue to your subscription when you return your form to us.

Also enclosed is another flier from us. It is a Sponsor a Subscriber. If you Sponsor a Subscriber, you can add to your present subscription without having to pay anything! By having one or more of your friends subscribe to Paper Mayhem and hav-

ing them include your full Name and address, you will be credited issues onto your present subscription. Your friend(s) must include your full name and address or we will be unable to credit issues to you. The Sponsor a Subscriber flier has further details on it. If by accident you don't receive a Sponsor a Subscriber flier, let us know and we will send one to you. You can copy the Sponsor a Subscriber flier and give it to as many of your friends as you want.

We hope you enjoy this issue, especially with articles about some new games. This goes to show you that the industry is still growing. Now all we have to do is make sure that we cover it all for you.

David C. Webber
Editor

OUR COVER ARTIST: S.S. CROMPTON

One of our regular contributing artists to Paper Mayhem and artist for more than a few PBM rule books is Steven S. Crompton.

Steve has been involved with the PBM & Gaming industry for more than a decade, doing illustrations, graphics & book designs for a wide range of genres from Science fiction, and humor to fantasy and contemporary subjects.

"My first assignment was some misc. drawings for the Starweb rulebook. That led me to being hired by Flying Buffalo where I worked for several years. I ended up doing the art for TRAPS, the Nuclear Escalation card game and some of Flying Buffalo's PBMs like Starlord, Galactic Conflict & the now forgotten Space Battle." It was a lot of hard work, and fun.

From there Steve made contacts with other publishers & PBM companies like Fantasy Games Unlimited, RSI and others.

"I'm in a very unique position now, I'm one of the only people who can freely travel between two competing PBM companies who are located within five miles of each other. It's great to see how the two companies operate. I do a lot of Art Direction & Illustrations for both RSI and Flying Buffalo, and I end up being privy to new planned games and marketing strategies, which I must keep to myself. I run the risk of losing both companies as clients if either one thought I was telling the other company secrets."

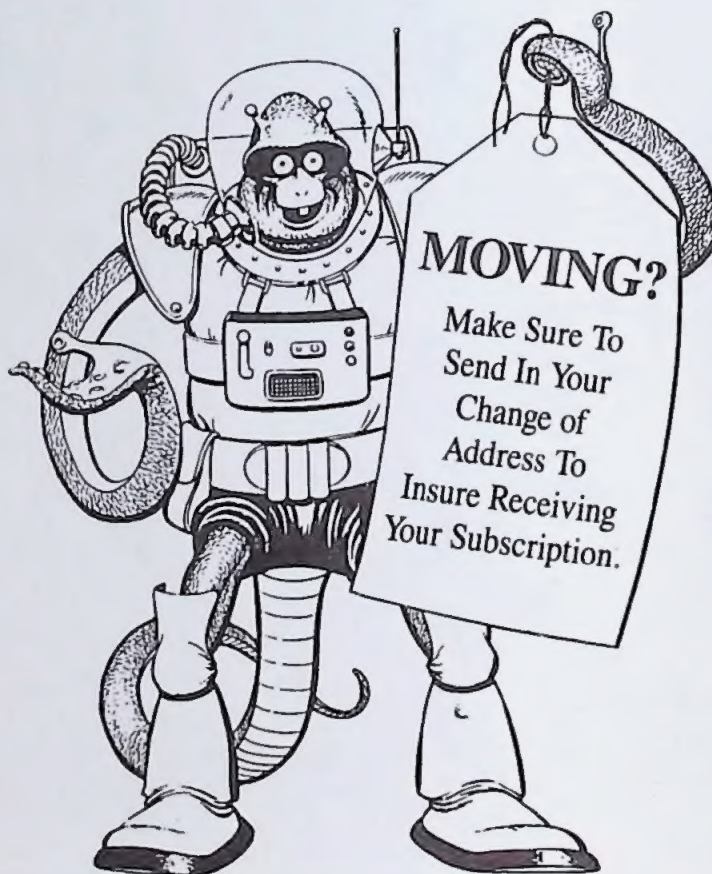
Steve has also worked with Advent Games, Cutting Edge Games, Emprise Games, Precedense GDW, Task Force games and most of the gaming magazine publishers.

Recently Steven is devoting most of his time to the Lejentia Campaigns Books, which are roleplaying aids for all game systems. H.J. Bennett is the writer and creator of Lejentia, Steve is its Art

Director. "Lejentia is my real love. I enjoy putting together the Graphic Novels & RPG Books. I like being able to control the entire process, from paste up and layout, to art and marketing. I'm hoping that people will begin to discover the depth and intricacies of the World of Lejentia. Lejenti's whole emphasis is on continuity and characteriza-

tion, those are the most important things in roleplaying." I'm talking to three different companies about a Lejentia Play-By-Mail game, so it's just a matter of time before we start on that."

Future Plans? "I want to become an exceptional illustrator and an expert at Marketing Consulting."



When was the last time you looked forward to your mail?

World Conquest[©]

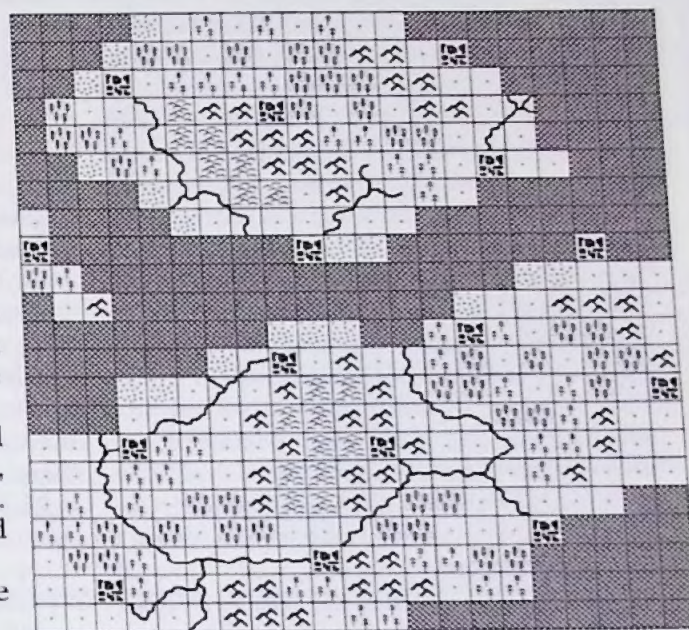
Play-By-Mail Game

© 1988 Prime Time Programming

World Conquest is a 100% computer-moderated play-by-mail game based in a World War II technology world. **World Conquest** was developed in 1986 and has been available to the gaming public since 1988. Every turn is laser-printed for clarity and detail. **World Conquest** was designed to be an inexpensive, entertaining, and playable system.

Look what you get for only \$3.00/turn!

- A full Unit Report listing of all your combat forces including their location, quality, and condition. You can even name your units! At the bottom of this page, you'll see neatly laser-printed messages from your neighbors! Sloppy, unreadable 3x5 cards are a thing of the past!
- A complete City Report showing all the cities you control, what production level they are at and what they are building. Larger cities have greater capabilities and can build bigger, better units!
- A Spotting Report indicating what you can see near your forces. Perhaps it is from that spy you have lurking in the mountains outside of Berlin, or maybe your Recon plane flying over the outskirts of Leningrad! You also get a local weather report indicating the location and size of any storms in your area. By watching these, you can see if your invasion might be jeopardized by an oncoming storm!
- A detailed, full page, Graphic Map of your explored territory (a small section of which is displayed to the right). As you move your units, unknown territory is explored to you revealing the dominant local terrain. Each turn you receive an updated map, showing your newly explored area!
- A complete combat report indicating if any of your units engaged the enemy last turn, and what the outcome was!



Each game starts with 12 players spread out on a 50x60 grid map. It is up to you how to govern your nation... Will you build a large navy and rule the seas? Or perhaps create a potent armor force capable of striking quickly into enemy territory? Maybe even great armadas of Fighters and Bombers to defeat the enemy from the air? Perhaps you will invest in high-technology research? Or train the Home Guard for Civil Defense. It is up to you to make the choices...

30 Types of Combat Units!

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• Fighters • Anti-Submarine Warfare Aircraft • Cargo Planes • Recon Aircraft • Strategic Bombers • PT Boats •
• Naval Transports • Submarines • Destroyers • Cruisers • Aircraft Carriers • Battleships • Minefields • Minesweepers •
• Rockets • Leaders • Spies • Forts • Airfields • Mechanized Infantry • Armored Cavalry •

Setup is \$10 for the rules and first three turns. Each turn is \$3.00 and a copy of the rules only can be obtained for \$5.00. Checks should be made payable to: **Prime Time Programming**. Inquiries & new setups should be directed to:

Prime Time Programming, P.O. Box 5018, Walnut Creek, CA 94596-1018.

NEW! Modern World Conquest

Modern World Conquest has now been opened to the general gaming public. Based on the popular **World Conquest** game system, **Modern World Conquest** takes the system even further... Now, with over 50 types of units to build, conquering the world has become an even greater challenge! **Modern World Conquest** adds the following units: Combat Engineers, Self-Propelled Artillery, SAMs, Fighter Bombers, AWACS Early-Warning Aircraft, Stealth Fighters, Ground Attack Helicopters, Air-Cavalry Helicopters, Stealth Bombers, Hydrofoils, Amphibious Assault Transports, Helicopter Carriers, Nuclear Attack Submarines, Ballistic Missile Submarines, Medium and Long-Range Missile delivery systems, Anti-Ballistic Missiles, Reconnaissance Sattelites, Orbital Lasers Sattelites, Killer Sattelites, Ground Tracking Stations, Electronic Counter Measures, Terrorists, and 7 different types of nuclear and non-nuclear warheads.

Coming Soon! Electronic World Conquest & Modern World Conquest

For those players with computers, there will soon be a all-electronic version of both Regular and Modern **World Conquest**! Players will be able to complete their turns using the versatile program **WCView** on any IBM Compatable computer with a color monitor. **WCView** is a program that will graphically display your turn and show all relevent information, including combat results from the previous turn, enemy activity, messages from other players, local weather fronts, and more! Then, when you are done, simply tell the computer to transmit the turn directly to the referee's computer (less than 3 minutes connect time using its own built-in telecommunications features). You can even set the computer to dial at a particular time to take advantage of lower rates). Then, after a pre-designated time, you can have the computer automatically call back and retrieve the results of the turn. We will be having turn cycles from 3 days up to 3 weeks!

PBM FORUM

I would like to thank Oren Webster and Gaston Biessener for their insights on how simple it is to duplicate hexagon mapping by using staggered squares and the principles behind this method. I wish someone had educated me about this method years ago!

Since we are on the subject of "Mapping Techniques for PBM Positions" in Number 41 I would like to mention something about the article. It was originally intended to appear in *Flagship* since I have always wanted to contribute an article to that magazine. Unfortunately it was turned down because it was too generic and thus did not fit within that publication's format. I then offered it to *Paper Mayhem* which has a more liberal format and it was accepted (Thanks Dave!). For you aspiring writers take note if one magazine rejects your article then try another. Also don't give up if you have problems seeing your articles printed. I have written about half a dozen articles for various PBM and general gaming magazines which have never seen the light of day. Many reasons exist why an article never gets published, but they all result in one thing for the author- FRUSTRATION. One of the instructors from my graduate school and I even did a statistical analysis of an early "Journal of the PBM Gamer" but by the time we finished it another edition of the Journal was out so I asked

Dave to pull the article! So don't get discouraged and if you have a bad experience or two keep on trying.

About keeping on trying (you get this guy on a soap box and you can't shut him up...). A couple of years ago I came up with the unoriginal idea of editing a "PBM Spotlight" column. The concept came from a column in the entertainment section of the now defunct Los Angeles Herald Examiner (I think?!) which took a look at a movie star each week. It contained the usual questions such as what kind of tofu does your dog prefer? Who is your most favorite gothic architect? and such... (just kidding but you get the idea). I've kicked this concept around for the last couple of years and have talked to a few people about it the last couple of years but really haven't tried to sell the column. My wife, Pam, has done something PBM gaming (yep, she has been corrupted) and is willing to help me edit such a column. Who do you think edits my articles! She figures she might as well get some recognition since she would end up doing the editing anyway. So in the spirit of the great N.P.I. leader Fidel, "Revolution to the Masses." We are asking any of the readers of *Paper Mayhem* who are interested to send a post card or short letter to us about the idea. We need to know:

1. Would you like to see such a column? Yes or

No. If yes:

2. Who would you like to see in it? Designers, game masters, editors, players - who? Name specific people in the order of your interest.

3. What kind of questions would you like to know? Sorry - questions concerning sex, politics and religion are out. I don't think Dave wants *Paper Mayhem* competing with the *National Enquirer*.

While we unfortunately don't have the time or resources to respond to these letters and post cards, we are sincerely appreciative of any input.

We will go through the responses and see if the column is viable from the readership's viewpoint. Dave will have the final say in this matter of course. If it is a go we will come up with a questionnaire using your ideas and mail it to your top choices in an attempt to make this a regular column (or at least till the spotlight runs out of targets!) Send your responses to:

"PBM Spotlight"

Robert J. Bunker and Pam Ligouri Bunker
742 Arcadia Ave.
Arcadia, CA 91007

PBM PLAYER'S GUILD UPDATE!

I would first like to congratulate Dave on *Paper Mayhem*'s seventh anniversary issue and thank him for his support of the PBM Player's Guild. Due to the support of the PBM publications and many moderators, Guild membership is growing by leaps and bounds.

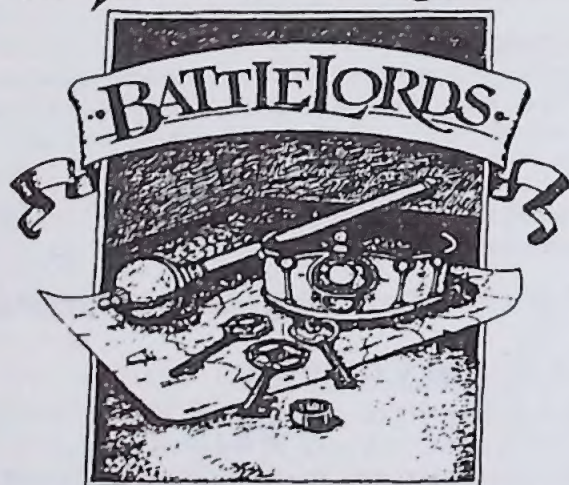
We now have some flyers available that players may find interesting and helpful. The Guild has a flyer for new players, a standard PBM terminology flyer for the experienced players. We also have a general description for newcomers on PBM to be handed out at gaming conventions.

The Guild is also putting together a network of "How To Guides" from various experienced players on many different games. Also, we are trying to find applicable software (i.e. spreadsheet programs) to be used by players to help players keep track of data in the games they currently play.

Finally, we are working with many moderators on \$5.00 discounts for Guild members. Details to follow in the next issues of available PBM Magazines or in our first newsletter due out in July. If you have yet to join the Player's Guild, send just \$5.00 to be a charter member and receive your 1990 PBMPG Survey, and game and company review forms. For general information, please write or call:

Play-By-Mail Player's Guild
C/O Don Lund
1434 West 135th Avenue
Denver, CO 80234-1114
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CIS #71271,220

Come Join The Quest...



BattleLords is a 100% computer-moderated medieval war game where eight to twelve players strive to be the first to find and retain three treasures, using cunning, diplomacy, military might and economic prowess. Each turn, players receive a seven-color map and a multi-page scouting report detailing their progress. Many game maps are available for play, including Europe, Great Britain, and Africa, as well as several fictional areas. Starting positions ready now! Team competitions and configurations available.

Cost is \$4.00 per turn (no other fees). Rule books are \$5.00. Set up package includes rule book and first three turns, all for \$10.00. Winners receive a BattleLords t-shirt and qualify for the Tournament of Champions. Send in your request Today!

Creative Keys

P.O. Box 7264, Fredericksburg, VA 22404

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ADVENTURER KINGS

By James Morgan

INTRODUCTION

Adventurer Kings is a game set in a fantasy medieval world of 162 provinces. There are 8-10 players in each game, each of whom controls his or her king or queen. The Adventurer King controls all aspects of the kingdom through the use of a fixed number of character actions. Each province has a terrain type, native race, army type, and tax base which remain fixed during the game. Each player starts with control of a single province. Most neutral provinces are garrisoned and should not be attacked lightly.

Actions and Action Sequence

Each turn of AK represents a year of game time. Each year includes five seasons Spring, Early Summer, Late Summer, Fall, and Winter. During each season each character can perform a single action. The actions available include Move, Explore, Search Feature, Recruit Armies, Hire Hero, Disband Army(s), Fire Hero, Leave Army(s), Cast Spell, Use Magic Item, Encounter Character, Practice Ability, Spy Province, Defend, Pursue, Trail and Give.

Characters

The basic control unit is the character. Each character has a name, a sex, ten hit points and is rated in each skill at one of the four ability levels. The character "abilities" are Tactical, March, Naval, Archery, Melee, White Magic, Necromancy, Elemental Magic, Psychic Magic, Illusory Magic, Druid, Thief, Spy, Explorer, and Sage. In each ability area each character has a current achievement level and an ability level which effects how high that character might expect to rise in that ability. Each character is hired (or charmed by a magic spell) into service for a fee after which the character must be paid each turn. Failure to pay characters may result in their leaving the King's service. Each character also has a fixed Temper. Temper is Berserk, Brave, Cautious, and Cowardly and will effect the behavior of that character in combat and encounter situations. For example a cowardly character might run from combat or refuse to encounter a powerful monster, whereas a Berserk character will add 1-4 hit points for berserk rage and will never refuse a mission even if there is no hope of victory.

Finally the character has an alignment (Good, Druidic, Neutral, Pagan, or Evil) which determines who can hire that character. In general a kingdom cannot hire a character more than two steps removed from that of the King. These other characters can sometimes be charmed or resurrected but the cost to maintain them is high because of the alignment difference. I recommend an alignment near the middle of beginners since more characters can be hired.

Kings

The Adventurer King is a specific character like any other with the exceptions that the King's druidic ability affects garrison troops with no leaders and should the king die, he/she is reborn as a Royal heir. A king can also fire and disband characters and armies without being in the same province.

Discoveries of the Sages

There are a number of "discoveries of the sages" which can provide benefit to a Kingdom. There are several ways to discover these items. First they can be learned the hard way by practice of the Sage ability, second they can be acquired through the use of Spies, and lastly they can be acquired through combat. The discoveries come in three flavors: those that increase the Kingdom's tax base, those which provide an ability bonus to the characters in a kingdom, and lastly those which provide protection from various personal combat spells to all characters in a Kingdom. An example of the first class is Ice Cream Cone (+1%

revenue), an example of the second is Scythed Chariots (+1 Tactics), and the third Reinforced Concrete (Anti-Spell Earthquake).

Races

Currently, there are 4 player races in AK: Elves, Dwarves, Orcs and Humans. There are also Dragon, Whale and Eagle non player races. There has been talk of adding a race of Mermen to inhabit the large seas but that remains for the future. Currently they are planned for all games starting after July 1.

The choice of race for an Adventurer King in the game is largely a matter of personal preference. All kings have the ability to hire and control units and characters of all races. The only drawback is that army units of different races fight at one level less than their current experience level when lead by a character or king of another race. Since half of the provinces in the game are Human the non-human king might find a smaller selection of quality units in the early going. To avoid this drawback the King could select one level of Druid ability

Adventurer Kings

The play-by-mail game of epic adventure

Now you can become a Caesar or King Arthur. You can rule a Kingdom, lead armies into campaigns of conquest, and adventure in dungeons and lairs defended by dangerous monsters.

In a recent poll of PBM players, Adventurer-Kings was the highest-rated fantasy wargame. Here's why:

- Moderately complex, yet easy-to-learn
- Each game-world is completely unique
- Exciting descriptions of battles and adventures
- Extensive untouched lands to discover and conquer
- Enjoyable character role-playing
- 15 character abilities which can be freely combined
- Over 60 magic artifacts and 25 spells
- Awesome player-aid program for IBM, Mac, Amiga, Atari ST. Free!
- Playable by mail, computer disk, or modem

You can buy the rules for \$2.00, which we will credit to your account when you begin a game, or just write to us for a free information packet. The turn fee is \$4.00. You can also try a 3-turn trial game for \$9.50, including rules. It's a good way to learn it and find out whether it's for you. Send to:

Ark Royal Games
P.O. Box 6378
Aloha, OR 97007
(503)-643-3292



which allows a character to lead armies of all other humanoid races without penalty. This is recommended in the rule book for Kings who do not chose to be human.

Magic and Magic Items

There are five types of magic in the game including White Magic, Psychic Magic, Illusory Magic, Elemental Magic and Necromancy. Each character can cast all spells in a type of magic for which he or she has a current ability. Within each spell class there are two types of spells: those which can be cast as an action during the turn and those which are only available as a personal combat spell. In general, the casting of spells is no sure thing;

a mage casting a spell in the action portion of a move has a 30% + 15% per level chance of success. The odds are better during personal combat at 30% + 15% per level, but never certain as the highest ability level is four.

There are many magic items in the game. These items are of three basic types. One type is an item which can be used to cast spells with 100% assurance at a set ability level. The second type affect the ability of a character or all characters in a kingdom. The third type includes special effect items including those which count toward victory.

Armies and Combat.

There are a variety of army unit types in the

game including Garrison, Bowman, Axeman, Phalanx, Legion, Light Cavalry, Heavy Cavalry, Chariots, Elephants, Camel Corps, Warg Riders, Dragon Wings, Eagle Wings, Whales and Fleets. Each individual unit is rated for basic strength and experience. Basic strength ranges from a low of 1 for garrisons on the offense to a high of 6 for Dragons. Experience is represented by six levels (Depleted-0, Green-1, Average-2, Veteran-3, Crack-4, and Elite-5). In general total army combat strength is basic strength times experience, however there are a number of racial, terrain and nemesis modifiers which interact in many ways to change the basic formula. Each army is recruited for a fixed amount which is also the yearly maintenance fee. Failure to pay maintenance will result in the reduction of unit experience and may cause some units to become mercenary (neutral units waiting for hire).

Combat occurs when enemy armies meet. There are two parts to combat, first the army commanders may fight a personal duel. If one of the army commanders is killed or refuses a duel it will have a negative impact on the morale and performance of his or her troops in combat. After the personal combat the armies engage in combat with victory going to the army which wins the most individual combats. A sample combat report is shown in Figure 1.

Encounters and Treasure

There are well over a hundred special encounters in the game. The special encounters are located all across the land. Each location is guarded by a monster and holds either a magic item, treasure or both. The locations are found as each province is explored. The monster is always known but it's hitpoints, abilities and tactics are not. The treasure guarded by the monster is sometimes known and sometimes not. There are many rumors in the game which give clues as to what might be in the features. Once a player determines to make an attempt to "search" a feature he chooses an encounter plan for the encounter. The encounter plan may be to talk to the monster, attack the monster, or to fulfill a quest given the character by that monster. The attack encounter plan can use Cast spell, Archery, Melee, Say and Flee commands. This plan is the only ability the player has to affect the combat. Be careful as monsters and evil monsters especially do not always want to talk and not all monsters are as good as their word. Do search features, as there are some fabulous treasures behind closed doors.

Diplomacy

Diplomacy is a feature built into the game in three levels: Enemy, Neutral and Allied. In the beginning all players are neutral. During any turn a king can treat or break treaty with another king. If two players treat in the same turn they will raise the level of the relationship one level. Likewise, a break treaty will lower the level of relationship by one step. Neutrals and allied Kingdoms can not fight each other. Evil Kings can break treat

FIGURE 1

From: Odysseus
To: Sargoth

Honored Sovereign,

Winter melted into spring, and I made ready to carry out my Imperial orders. I cast a spell giving magical powers of oratory to me. With the coming of the early summer season, my Phantasmal Armies spell fizzled and I wound up with my face covered with psycho-kinetic slime. In late summer, I practiced my Druidism diligently for months, but could make no progress. The hot days of summer mellowed into a colorful fall. I moved into Wormwood with my high-spirited army.

Emperor Sargoth sent an invasion force into the adjacent Forest province of Wormwood, owned by the provincial Dragon chieftain. I was in command of the invading armies. The defenders were led by the provincial Dragon chieftain. The armies were drawn up into lines of battle as shown here:

ATTACKING ARMY

66th Dwf Axemen 	
192nd Dwf Axemen 	179th Elf Bowmen
191st Dwf Axemen 	166th Dwf Axemen
45th Dragons	44th Dragons

DEFENDING ARMY

Standing tall with my warriors was I. No generals were present to lead the forces of the provincial Dragon chieftain. My luck took a turn for the better when my scouts located a prominent granite outcropping, which proved useful as an observation post. Also, my clever tactical planning gave my side an undeniable advantage.

Out on the left wing, the Crack 191st Axemen were arrayed against the Veteran 45th Dragons. The 192nd Axemen outflanked the enemy and charged in with full force. The 45th Dragons soared over the enemy troops and attacked without mercy. On this battleground, the men of the 45th Dragons fell to looting before the battle was over, reducing their numbers a little. The 191st Axemen fought the 45th Dragons and advanced at will.

Out on the right wing, the 179th Bowmen faced the Veteran 44th Dragons. The 179th Bowmen outflanked the enemy lines and attacked with full force. The 44th Dragons were somewhat dispersed by rocks falling from a cliff which disrupted their formation, saddling them with a significant disadvantage. The 166th Axemen fought with the 44th Dragons and overcame them with their thundering charge.

My great horde overwhelmed the army of the provincial Dragon chieftain and took the field, scattering their enemies. The 191st Axemen panicked the 45th Dragons with their ferocious attack and destroyed the 45th Dragons. The battle Dragons with their campaign successfully and conquered Wormwood. The battle My host ended the campaign successfully and conquered Wormwood. The battle affected the quality of our forces: the 179th Bowmen was greatly buoyed by the exciting battle. We now rate it a Veteran unit. The 44th Dragons could not escape and were disbanded into the general population. I practiced my

The fall darkened into the stillness of early winter. I practiced my Druidism diligently for months, but could make no significant headway.

Thy humble servant, Odysseus

treaty at the beginning of the turn. All other break treaty at the end of a turn. Druidic Kings can raise the level of a relationship without a corresponding treat from the other King.

Victory

The end of a Game of AK can be caused by either join or single action. A single-action end is triggered when a King controls 55% of the world tax base. A possible joint end is triggered when kings controlling 55% of the tax base call for an election. In the single end the player with 55% of the tax base is declared the World Emperor (which counts for 20% of total victory points). In a joint end of game each active king votes according to his tax base for the World Emperor and if one king gets a majority of the vote the game ends, if not the game continues. A vote cannot be held two turns in a row.

The GM maintains a prize fund equal to 10% of turn fees which is allocated to the victors in accordance with performance for the Imperial offices. There are eight Imperial Offices, as follows: World Emperor (20%), Esteemed High Chancellor (10%), Imperial Treasurer (10%), Imperial Grand Admiral (10%), High Lord Defender (10%), Imperial Grand Marshal (10%), High Priest Palatine (10%), and Arch-Mage Palatine (10%). There are also ten Merit points awarded for the control of ten particular magic items. Each player receives a yearly status report of his kingdom's characters in the race for Imperial office which shows the rating of the two best hopes for each office relative to the rating of the best character in all the kingdoms (Figure 2). It should be noted that it is possible for the World Emperor to end up with a minority of the total victory points with the "win" going to some other king. The difference between the Alignment of the World Emperor and other kingdoms will reduce the merit points awarded to other kingdoms.

Feel

The turn results include a prose report from each character for each season, if a character dies his squire reports in his/her place. Combat reports are included as a part of the seasons reporting. In addition, there is a map provided on each printout, a list of all characters and their attributes, a list of all armies and their attributes, the Imperial Office report, a list of all provinces in the empire, a list of all characters which hope to be hired by the kingdom and a list of all special locations and their guardians known to the kingdom.

Start up and Tactical Considerations

The game setup requires the selection of the King's Name, Title, Temper, Four Abilities, Alignment and Race.

There are a number of considerations which may assist the novice player with Adventurer Kings. The most important is the initial choice of the Kings abilities since this will provide the initial base for the player to build from. In this context I prefer to pick abilities from the following list: (Tactics,

IMPERIAL OFFICE REPORT

Into thy heroic dreams cometh an apparition heaven-sent, to speak to thee of thy progress in thy ambitions for Imperial Office. It is not for mortal Kings to know who rivals them for high offices, but the Divine One will allow you to know thy place in the standings, and how thee compares to thy fiercest foreign rival for each office (shown under "Riv%" as a percentage: your points divided by your rival's points, times 100.)

Imperial Office	Best Hope	Rank	Riv%	Second Hope	Rank	Riv%
World Emperor	Sargoth	1	101	None		
Esteemed High Chancellor	Helatia	2	69	Adhemar	4	56
Imperial Treasurer	Sargoth	6	14	None		
Imperial Grand Marshal	Sargoth	2	96	Odysseus	3	61
Imperial Grand Admiral	Sargoth	2	45	Aegir	2	45
Lord High Defender	Riose	1	122	Helatia	6	31
High Priest Palatine	Helatia	2	73	Saladin	17	33
Arch-Mage Palatine	Sargoth	2	84	Saladin	5	61

ADVENTURE

O Luminous One, adventure awaits thee and thy companions at every corner of the globe! Fearsome monsters lurk in their cavernous hidden lairs by day and terrorize the populace by night. Can not men of courage be found to combat these terrible menaces? I here list the aforesaid known menaces and the men who may be persuaded to risk their lives for love of God, King, fame and gold (though not necessarily in that order!):

Features and characters in Veraval (100% Explored)

A Tomb(#3) occupied by a Spectre, owning these item(s):
Large Hoard of Gold (#3)

Features and characters in Wolfhome (45% Explored)

A Petrified Forest(#116) occupied by a Gryphon, guarding unknown riches
The grave of Tlazolteotl (88) (who was famous for Psychic Magic)

Features and characters in Carabinia (100% Explored)

A Altar(#112) occupied by a Renegade Illusionist, guarding unknown riches

Features and characters in Wormwood (100% Explored)

Jame (3) (a Elf renowned for White Magic) employed by Jame

Features and characters in Ahdogast (100% Explored)

A Catacombs(#36) occupied by a Lich, guarding unknown riches

Features and characters in Zululand (86% Explored)

A Tomb(#100) occupied by a Succubus, guarding unknown riches
A Great Hall(#127) occupied by a Renegade Necromancer, owning these item(s):
Crystal of Seeing (#127)
Loviatar (92) (who is renowned for White Magic) employed by Bethollon

Features and characters in Shasta (100% Explored)

A Tomb(#29) occupied by a Balrog Demon, owning these item(s):
Golden Orb of Elemental Stability (#29)
The grave of Ningarl (13) (who was famous for White Magic)

Features and characters in Goldleaf (23% Explored)

A Maze(#44) occupied by a Renegade Necromancer, guarding unknown riches
A Labyrinth(#121) occupied by a Hydra, owning these item(s):
Huge Hoard of Gold (#121)

Naval, Magic, Marches) leaving the development of other abilities for later in the game. In the initial turns a player should attempt to take as much territory as possible. Therefore abilities which improve the combat abilities of kingdom forces are needed. As the game progresses and neutrals are taken and their former leaders become available for hire, it is recommended that players gain control of as many characters as possible since these provide more orders and control to a kingdom. I recommend that all possible characters be hired. In this context I recommend that when attacking a neutral, the player not use an aggressive combat special order. Even if the tactic is successful in that the neutral character is killed and the player gets the resulting 25% combat bonus, which results in the initial gain of the province, it is offset by the fact that the character is dead and cannot be hired by the player. In this context a player with good white magic can be more aggressive since dead

FIGURE 2

characters can be raised by the resurrect character spell. Finally if beset by enemies, remember that defenders get a 25% bonus. The defender can often select the terrain for the combat providing an additional bonus and by all means make every attempt to kill the enemy characters, since you cannot be attacked unless there are characters to lead the enemy armies. On your side, always cross-train your characters since their ability will lead your kingdom to victory. Also remember the characters act in order of their total ability score, with the March counted three times.

Conclusion

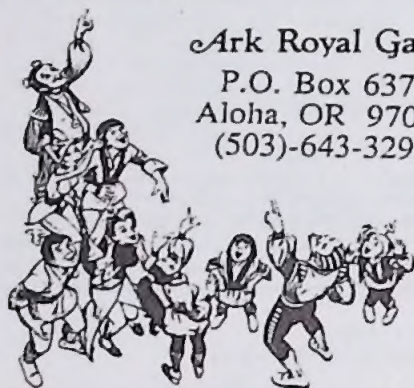
The preceeding has been a brief overview of some of the features of Adventurer Kings. The game has many more features that I have not been able to cover in this review.

I recommend the game Adventurer Kings to Fantasy game players. SAGA, see below, is

highly recommended to players and PBM companies alike as an important improvement in the state of the art in PBM.

SAGA!

SAGA is a computer program which can be used to enter moves and evaluate results of moves. Ark Royal has a winner with this program it is graphical, colorful, useful and can be downloaded for free. The program features on-line documentation and automatically checks for errors then refers the player to specific sections of the rulebook. In addition to it's ability to enter moves, all data in the turn is available for browsing while data is being entered. This program, including introductory material and a sample turn can be downloaded from either Genie or Compuserve or send Ark Royal a disk and they will fill it for free, or buy it for \$3.00.



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David L. B.
TRANSUE



QUEST OF THE GREAT JEWELS

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THE VENOM REVIEW OR HOW I FOUND NIRVANA THROUGH BACKSTABBING

By Bill Heine

You are hereby warned. The rule book begins: "VENOM is a strategic backstabbing fantasy play-by-mail game..." You are not going to make friends here. But you might have fun.

VENOM is the latest in fantasy-based play-by-mail games offered by Games Systems, Inc. VENOM is 100% computer moderated, and is designed for 20 players assigned the title *Demigod* which takes place on a map of 40x54 squares of various terrain. The purpose is for each Demigod to assemble of various terrain. The purpose is for each Demigod to assemble enough power and resources throughout the course of the game so as to be the only player left alive: thus becoming winner (or a true God, as the rules state). Although diplomacy and communication is allowed—and encouraged by the use of 3x5 cards—any alliance is going to be on thin ice as eventually one player can be declared winner; the others must either be killed or drop out voluntarily.

The most interesting aspect about VENOM is that each player is able to design his own unique character from a list of choices in several different categories. This is similar to several science-fiction style PBM games which allow you to design your own spaceships from lists of engines, weapons, shields, etc... Of course we are dealing with fantasy here, so everything will be magic rather than technology.

However, each player does start with many of the same basic necessities a growing Demigod needs to get started:

1) **A Palace.** Everyone needs a place to go home to after a tough day at the office and Demigods are no exception. This is where you can go to recover from battle wounds and replenish your energy. (After an especially tough time with a nasty devil, I thought it would be nice to have a little Mrs. Demigod at home to provide chicken soup and back rubs...) Of course this is no mortal-like palace. Your palace floats in the clouds (thus harder to find) and can be teleported to different locations. In addition it can be rebuilt if destroyed—unless you were in it at the time of destruction, in which case GSI has a nice form letter/pink slip they send asking if you want to sign up for another game.

2) **5 Divisions.** The troops which make up your division are called *hands*. Your divisions wander around the world conquering territory and recruiting settlements and followers to your cause. They do battle with the divisions of the other Demigods. In a peculiar twist, you are not allowed to have 2 or more of your own divisions in a square at the same time or they will fight each other!! This makes it difficult (but not impossible) to transfer hands and other items between your division. It also makes it hard to gang up on your enemy, forcing wargamers to be far more imaginative by fin-

ding means other than sheer force to eliminate other players.

3) **Mines and Portals.** There are 2 types of mines: *gold* which can be used to induce followers to your cause (the more followers you have, the more powerful you are), and *essence*, which is used in the production of magic items you make at your palace. Portals gate in a fixed number of hands each turn which join your divisions. The capture of an enemy portal is a big help; however, when that player is eliminated from the game all of his original mine and portals will fade from existence regardless of ownership.

4) **Staff of Power.** A staff of power has 6 powers (or spells) which it will automatically perform at the start of each turn. The nice thing here is that even if you manage to miss a turn, the staff will still work for you. There are 23 different possible powers from which you choose 6 at the start of the game. Therefore, each player will very likely have a different staff. Some staff powers will improve certain skills (e.g., gambling) by a small amount each turn. Skills are measured in percentages which start at zero—a 100% gambling skill means you would never lose—and the staff will add about 2% to 4% each turn until 100% is reached. Other staff powers include events such as magic hunt: your divisions look for buried artifacts each turn; or +50 followers each turn.

It is my opinion that you are probably better off using the other means available to improve your skills and reserve the majority of your staff powers to the other items which do not appear elsewhere. For example I feel that +50 followers is a better choice over increasing gambling since there are other ways to increase gambling but no way to automatically add 50 followers each turn.

You can perform up to 4 *activities* each turn to improve various skills which you choose from a list of 17 possibilities. These activities are part of the same list from which you choose the staff powers. The difference is that you can change your activities from turn to turn. I feel that it might be better to concentrate on 2 or 3 skills and become very good at those few, rather than trying to be a jack-of-all trades, especially in the beginning of the game. The 2 skills I feel are essential are *Fly Training* and *Sight*.

As it turns out, your divisions do not *walk* from square to square, they *fly*! However, it seems that your troops are not too well trained in navigation at the start of the game and can be blown off course by heavy winds and thus become *lost*. When your division is lost you are not given its location and must guess its coordinates based on the terrain it is in from turn to turn until you guess correctly. This is a real pain. Fly Training reduces the

chances of your divisions becoming lost.

Sight improves the chances that your division will see a wide variety of things in a square. It reduces the chances of blindly stumbling into traps set by other players, and it improves the chances in finding magic which may be hidden.

5) **Ring of Spells.** From a list of 11 possibilities you choose 5 spells which are stored in your ring for the duration of the game. Like the staff, these are unchangeable for the duration of the game. However, through an activity called *prayer* you can learn additional spells which are not listed in the rule book! I found this to be very difficult as the majority of my attempts failed.

To me the most useful ring spells were *Vision I* and *Vision II*. These allow you to view every square in an *entire* row or column (depending on which you cast). First, you can learn where a lot of settlements are very quickly. This is very useful since you can eventually build settlements into cities, and the more cities you own the more territory and other benefits you derive. All of which make you more powerful.

Second, it is a big help in locating mines and portals belonging to other players. One way to own a square is to station some NPC hands (called *ghosts*) in the square to form a *border guard army*. Once placed there, the ghosts can never rejoin your division again. However, the ghosts will recruit 2 additional mortals as border guards per ghost each turn! This can lead to a substantial gathering of fighters ready to defend your territory! At the beginning of the game the only square you control are the ones containing your mines and portals. In addition, these squares start with 10 ghosts and 200 mortals as defense.

However, this can cause you real problems. Mines and portals are invisible; the only way to actually see a mine or portal belonging to another player is to have a division stop in the square and use your *sight* skill successfully. Since sight starts at 0% it is going to be impossible in the early stages of the game. Because of this, *Vision I* and *Vision II* will not reveal mines and portals to you. These spells will, however, tell you the number of border guards each square contains and who they belong to. I like to start casting Vision spells right on the first turn, since if I locate another player's border guards I know I have found mine or portal.

Here is where I saw other players make two big mistakes right from the start. First, many players seem to favor locating all of their mines and portals right on the edge of the map. Second, many players like to locate their mines and portals right next to each other. Even worse (better for you), many players locate their mines and portals right next to each other in the same row or column.

In the beginning, your border guard armies are no match for even the wimpiest of divisions, so if another player finds you, you are lunchmeat. If you lose all of your mines--and especially portals for they build your divisions--you are going to have real problems. So I have three suggestions for locating your mines and portals at the start of the game:

- 1) Do not place them at the edge of the map.
- 2) Do not place any 2 in the same row or column.
- 3) Do not place them within 10 squares of each other.

Another problem is that if another player attempts to move through one of your squares with border guard armies will let his divisions pass without stopping and your "friend" will never even sion of your valuable square! As we can see, it is very difficult to *defend* territory in VENOM, but much easier to take! Therefore we have to find other means than sheer force to defend our property.

Your first step is to follow my three suggestions above. This makes you hard to find. Second, you can declare one player at a time a *friend*. Your border guard armies will let his division pass without stopping and your "friend" will never even know you were there. Do this with any player near you early in the game. Later, you will do this to enemies who might wish to destroy everything you own. Finally, each turn you may move one entire

border guard up to 4 squares. I strongly suggest that you consider moving every border guard army off its original location and leave all mines and portals undefended! This means that your enemies will only find yours by sheer luck.

MAGIC

Magic is the bread and butter of Demigods in VENOM. It comes in several different forms, two of which have already been described: the staff of power, and the rings of spells. In addition you have spells you can cast from a spell list (different spells than the ring spells, but each Demigod has the same list), scroll spells which you make in your palace, MIRACLES, and artifacts. Artifacts are found by your divisions as they wander the world. Many of the ones I found aided me in combat somehow.

Ring spells and regular spells are cast using *spell points*. Spell points are accumulated in various ways outlined in the rule book. A very useful and especially nasty spell to cast is *teleport other*. You can teleport another players division to a random location where he will then be lost!! Think about it. Suppose your most hated enemy shows up at your palace with an army you know you will never defeat. Simply cast *teleport other* on his division and, if successful (okay, is has a chance of failure), it will probably be several turns before that player can figure out where he is. Needless to say, this is a very expensive spell to cast in terms of spell

points. Then again, why even wait until someone tries to attack you. It is even better to start teleporting without provocation.

To be a God, it is not enough to simply impress people with your high school science experiments called spells. To be a God, you have to be able to work MIRACLES. And of course you can. Miracles use an even more important commodity called *experience points*, the accumulation of which are vital to victory. Miracles cause earthquakes, recruit followers, teleport your palace, or rebuild it if necessary. Miracles cause the tiniest of camps and villages to become major cities which become completely dedicated to YOU (making you even more powerful). When you build a city, many of the squares around it will become yours if you do not already own them (build a city, and the suburbs always pop up, I guess).

There are two types of scroll spells which you can make with *essence* from your essence mine: teleport and locate. Build them both and build them often. Teleport is used by your divisions to teleport to any location. This is especially good for getting to your palace in a hurry, or better yet to your enemy's palace! Locate will give you the map coordinates of the "...divisions of a player if the divisions are on the ground, not invisible, and not under illusion..." (Quote from rule book).

MAJOR STRATEGY HUNT

When *LOST*, use a *LOCATE* scroll on

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YOURSELF. Mastering the art of PBM means finding every twist of the rules and putting them to tag. The rules state that when lost you need to keep guessing each turn until you figure out where you are. The rules DO NOT state that this is the only way, they just fail to mention any other way. Discovering these little twists is all part of the fun of the game, and in their other PBM offerings GSI is well known for leaving things out of the rule book for later discovery.

MAJOR STRATEGY HINT II

When *LOST*, move your division in a single direction until you find the edge of the map. Then use your ring spell *VISION* to find out where you are. The lost rule can be a powerful tool against your enemies and only a minor inconvenience to yourself. Clever players could undoubtedly find more ways to find a lost division.

THE NINTH DIMENSION

The *Ninth Dimension* is a special place where Demigods go to do combat. When you enter the ninth dimension, your possessions such as hands, squares owned, villages, cities, and other statistics such as experience points are assigned a numerical value giving you a set number of points. With these points you design a creature which will do battle with the creatures of other demigods.

There must be millions of different creatures possible. There are 11 different categories: SIZE, EYES, HEAD, TORSO, SKIN, WINGS, MOUTH, ARMS, HANDS, TAIL AND SPECIAL ABILITIES. From each category you can pick one item depending on how many points you wish to spend. From SIZE, for example, the more points you spend, the bigger you are—which means you will be slow but strong. Under HEAD we see that there are 10 possibilities, including the option of our creature having up to 5 heads!

It is important to understand and remember that when only four players remain in the game, they are all sent to the ninth dimension to THE FINAL BATTLE until only ONE creature remains alive. The player with the last alive creature WINS! This is the only way to win at VENOM. Therefore, when you start playing your two goals should be to: 1) Eliminate as many of the other players as possible so that you are one of the last four; and 2) Accumulate as much as you can so you will get enough points in the ninth dimension to build a sufficiently powerful creature.

Because of the large number of creatures which can be created, it is almost impossible to discuss strategy in the ninth dimension. No matter how many points you get, you are not going to be able to build the perfect creature which is invulnerable to everything. My best guess is that you should choose between speed or size and put the most points into one or the other. Then choose one form of attack and put the maximum number of points towards it. Next choose the best of the special abilities you can. Finally put whatever you have left towards defense. It seems that the old adage

the best defense is a good offense will apply, and if you can make it through the first combat round still alive your chances will be pretty good. However, I am no expert in this area since in the two times I have made it to the final battle I was used as warm-ups and practice target by the other three.

THE GAME MODERATORS

In terms of complexity, Venom falls into the medium-difficult category. Out of all the games GSI offers, this is probably the most difficult to understand at first as there is a tremendous amount of information packed into the rule book. A very careful reading—probably twice—is required. The rule book does give a good run through on how to fill out your turn sheet, plus a dictionary which defines most of the terms used, and an index—both of which make it easier to look things up as you need them.

I have been playing PBM with GSI since 1984, and since that time *without fail* their processing system has run as follows: on the due date of the turn after that day's mail is checked, every player's turn is input, the entire game is processed, and new turn sheets are printed which are then mailed out *the same day*. If your due dates are two weeks apart and that day is (for example) a Tuesday, then your turns will be processed and mail to you every other Tuesday. Despite the U.S. Mail, you can expect your turns to arrive every other week on the same day, so if it does not arrive when expected, blame the post office, not GSI. I know this all sounds so simple, but then why can't more PBM companies use GSI as a role-model in this respect?

As for access to the moderator, GSI is a very professionally run company. Their staff can be reached by phone during regular office hours, and you will find them quite willing to discuss any problems you might have in understanding any of their games.

Problems

Regular readers of *Paper Mayhem* are aware that there has been a lot of controversy surrounding VENOM lately in the "letters" column of the magazine. Yes, VENOM, like all PBM games, does have its problems. Perhaps the biggest is that there can be turns where it seems like nothing has happened—in fact it might have often been better to not have even submitted a turn! Therefore it might seem as though your divisions are simply wandering aimlessly around the map with no purpose whatsoever. Players have to remember the goal of the game when they sign up: to accumulate enough power to make it to the *Final Combat* with the remaining three players. Since the majority or your power is going to be measured by the number hands in your divisions plus the number of squares you own, combat may not be the best course for you.

While your divisions are wandering around they will have random encounters. Another problem I had was that I kept getting the same events over

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DEMIGOD of in VENOM

Balance = \$ 0.00
You are on special service.

Next turn due by **DECEMBER 5, 1989**

Game 11
Turn 22

Player 14
Sec. Code: [REDACTED]

BILL HEINE

EXPERIENCE = 3620 SPELL POINTS = 19 ENERGY POINTS = 50
REVENGE POINTS = 1 CURRENT LIFE = 3209
TOTAL FOLLOWERS = 4671 CITIES = 0 TOWNS = 0 VILLAGES = 0 CAMPS = 1
Staffs: 17, 4, 23, 21, 19, 18 Ring: 14, 15, 16, 13, 11 (Spells)
Borders: 22% Region A 18% Region B 6% Region C 0% Region D 0% Region E
Friends: 16

SKILLS

Flying 36%	Detect Traps 36%	True Sight -3%
Training 24%	Gambling 0%	Spy Training 28%
Security 0%	Sight 27%	Resist Tele. 0%

FOCUS

(1-NA) (2-NA) (3-8) (4-9) (5-NA) (6-NA) (7-NA) (8-NA) (9-NA) (10-NA)
(11-11) (12-NA) (13-NA) (14-0) (15-NA) (16-13) (17-10) (18-10) (19-NA) (20-NA)

RESULTS:

Total number of all player Divisions destroyed during combat this turn: 0
DEMIGOD WAS NOT IN PALACE. Adding 10% to Palace Hands.

CASTING SPELL 6!

BORDER GUARDS COMBAT (Player 14 Division 2 VS Guards of Player 16) @ 13-35
Player 14 has 736 SHADOWS 754 GHOSTS 749 SPIRITS 1 ANGEL(S)
Player 16 has 12 MORTALS 1 GHOSTS
Round # 1...Player 14 took 203 damage points.
Round # 1...Player 16 took 132541 damage points.
Player 14 has 732 SHADOWS 754 GHOSTS 749 SPIRITS 1 ANGEL(S)
Player 16 has NO ONE left alive!
THE BORDER GUARDS WERE ALL DESTROYED!

BORDER GUARDS COMBAT (Player 14 Division 3 VS Guards of Player 10) @ 16-38
Player 14 has 59 SHADOWS 21 GHOSTS 1 ANGEL(S)
Player 10 has 36 MORTALS 2 GHOSTS
Round # 1...Player 14 took 504 damage points.
Round # 1...Player 10 took 3209 damage points.
Player 14 has 49 SHADOWS 21 GHOSTS 1 ANGEL(S)
Player 10 has NO ONE left alive!
THE BORDER GUARDS WERE ALL DESTROYED!

BORDER GUARD ARMY (Player 3) VS Border Guards of Player 14 @ 10-15
Player 3 has 302 MORTALS 33 GHOSTS
Player 14 has 40 MORTALS 10 GHOSTS
Round # 1...Player 3 took 883 damage points.
Round # 1...Player 14 took 5624 damage points.
Player 3 has 267 MORTALS 33 GHOSTS
THE DEFENDING BORDER GUARDS WERE ALL DESTROYED BY THE BORDER GUARD ARMY!

BORDER GUARD ARMY FROM 06-36 MOVES 4555

** border guard army is passing through square /-3/.
** Border Guards spotted a division of a player and stopped.

CASTING MIRACLE...18! AT 1131

** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 8-30: Nothing happened.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 8-32: Nothing happened.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 8-33: 38 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 8-34: Nothing happened.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 9-30: Nothing happened.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 9-31: 4 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 9-32: 12 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 9-33: 22 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 10-32: CAMP was destroyed!!!
12 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 10-33: Nothing happened.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 10-34: Nothing happened.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 11-29: 60 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 11-33: 4 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 11-34: Nothing happened.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 12-31: CAMP was destroyed!!!
40 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 12-33: 4 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 12-34: Nothing happened.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 13-29: 180 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 13-32: 22 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 13-33: 4 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 14-32: 700 Mortal Border Guards died.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 14-33: Nothing happened.
** EARTHQUAKE FELT AT 14-34: 12 Mortal Border Guards died.

PLAYER 14 DIVISION 5 met a wizard last turn. Have 1500 gold.
Enroem says "Thanks! Hey, did you know there is something magical at 47-6 it is very powerful. But it has a special invisibility on it. You must have at least a 20% Sight or 20% True Sight to see it. The first division to stop in this square without another division present will automatically pick up the magic item (if conditions are met)!"

and over. In addition, they were not always that interesting. It would help if there was a greater variety of encounters, and if steps were taken to insure that you did not repeat the same ones.

Another big problem is that if an enemy division stops at a square that you own you do not know about it until the following turn when you get a battle report (usually showing that your border guards were killed off). Therefore you are always a turn behind in knowing who is after your territory. Defending territory in VENOM is practically impossible.

STRATEGY

The combination of these problems with other aspects of the game bring up the potential of a very viable strategy: that of the pacifist. I believe that VENOM is basically not a wargame! It is very difficult, if not impossible, to defend a territory. It actually might be better to scatter your divisions in all different directions and take squares in various parts of the map. Common wargamer sense would have you bunching your squares together around your palace. I do not recommend this here. In addition, I have already mentioned that I feel it is better to leave your most valuable squares--those with mines and portal--undefended!

Also, you cannot have two of your divisions in the same square, if it does happen they end up fighting each other. In addition, the divisions of three or more players cannot occupy the same square (if they do, they all go to the ninth dimension and fight it out). Therefore two players cannot gang up on one player at the same location. This puts a serious damper on any alliance.

The strategy I like the best was to simply stay a pacifist and let the other players fight for territory. There are so many squares available that there is not going to be a shortage of unowned territory. I like finding tracts of unowned squares (by using my ring spell *VISION*) and making them mine rather than taking them away from someone else. The reason being that, if you want, you can make life very miserable for another player--or they can make it miserable for you.

In addition, since hands are so important in points for creature creation in final combat, I do not like killing them off in unnecessary battle early in the game. Sure you can wipe out another player's division or city at great cost to him, but you are going to give up a lot of irreplaceable troops doing so. If you have to fight, make sure that your hands have as many weapons and (especially) armor as you can give them.

If a certain player is really giving you a hard time and you are just itching to do combat with him, there are several nice actions which the rules allow you to take. Each player is allowed two *revenge wishes*. The more powerful the player you cast a revenge wish on, the greater devastation it will cause him! This can be a lot of fun--but, of course, it is very dangerous. A revenge wish can fail or backfire. In addition there is a ring spell called *revenge wish reversal* which can cause revenge

wish to bounce off you and back on the player who cast it!

If a player's palace is destroyed and the Demigod is in it, that player is killed off and out of the game. If I can locate another player's palace, I like to send the most powerful division I have to sit outside of it and NOT attack. It just sits there for several turns! The player owning the palace will have to keep his Demigod out of the palace while you are there (a Demigod grows weaker every turn he is away from his palace). The other player can only attack you if he sends another division to the palace, so make sure that your division can fend off the other players divisions. Also, you run the risk of being teleported, so you might want to cast a locate scroll on yourself in advance.

If you cast a teleport other spell on another player, he will not know who did it. So when you have the spell points, go ahead and cast this on those troublesome players, you do not have to wait for them to attack you. Also, there is a spell called *stealing* which can harass the other players and they will never know it was you.

Finally, one truly great spell is *illusion*. Cast it on yourself, and another player will be told that you are someone else! Think about the beauty of attacking a player, having his print-out showing that it was not you but another player, and then having the attacked player start casting his revenge wishes on the wrong person. You can start a whole war between players and just sit back and enjoy the fun. This can be an especially great backstab, since you could attack your "ally" and then share his indignation in being attacked by someone else.

VENOM is a great game for backstab, so before deciding whether you wish to join you should keep this in mind, along with the fact that VENOM is basically not a wargame. If you are looking for a PBM wargame where might makes rights, but in a fantasy setting, then VENOM might not be for you, and I suggest you try another GSI product: EARTHWOOD. VENOM is a much more cerebral game. You will use combat, sure, but there might have been less costly methods at your disposal.

Anyone who has played VENOM and has read this review has noticed countless things I have left out. There are simply too many things I could get into, and I did not wish to confuse the uninitiated any further than necessary. I do recommend the game to anyone who believes this style of play fits them. And if you ever wanted the perfect game designed for *backstabbing* this is it!

STAFF POWER: Healing Demigod for 50 points.
STAFF POWER: Adding 10 shadows to divisions.
STAFF POWER: Adding 50 followers to Demigod.
MAGIC HUNT.....UNSUCCESSFUL.
PRAYING.....Failed. No new miracle learned.
GHOST RITUAL....creating ghosts.
SPIRIT RITUAL....creating spirits.
ESSENCE HUNT....see encounters of divisions.

DIVISION 3 FOUND A SCROLL CREATED BY THE HIGH ONE
Scroll disappeared after it was read (activated).
You gained 245 experience, 3 spell points & 6 energy!
THERE IS A CURRENT RULING KING OF THE 9th DIMENSION!!!

PALACE LOCATION SCROLL USED ON PLAYER 16 YIELDS FOLLOWING:
No information was received. Divisions are invisible or under an illusion.

DEMIGOD

Located at 17-38
You are not looking for Palaces or Demigods as you are in a HEALING TRANCE.

PALACE

Located at row 17 and column 38	Number of traps =	0
Essence = 500	Locate Scrolls =	2
Swords +14 = 0	Teleport Scrolls =	4
Angels = 0	Ghosts =	0
Spirits = 0	Shadows =	0

DIVISION 1

This division contains the following:

1 Angel	4400 Gold	0 Bows	10 Magic Shields
631 Spirits	647 Essence	0 Arrows	0 Magic Armor
609 Ghosts	0 Teleport Scroll(s)	2 Magic Swords +14	
610 Shadows	0 Swords	0 Sorcery Blades	

Division moved East -> East-> East-> East-> East-> East
Division is at row 10 and column 33.
The terrain here is plains.

THE FINAL BATTLE

9TH DIMENSION BATTLE:

* FINAL COMBAT *

IN THIS POCKET, PREPARING FOR BATTLE (listed in order of speed):

You see a immensely sized 37 foot insect-like creature with a crocodillian head, and no mouth. It has translucent skin, two tentacle arms with pinched hands, bat-like wings and two tails. (Of player 14)

You see a average sized 6 foot creature with a normal head, and no mouth. It has smooth skin, one arm with taloned hands, insect-like wings and two long tails. (Of player 3)

You see a massive 38 foot reptillian creature with a dragon-like head, and no mouth. It has smooth skin, two arms with normal hands, no wings and no tail. (Of player 17)

Round 1: Creature (Player 14) MENTALLY attacked monster (player 3).
: and MISSED!

Round 1: Creature (Player 3) PHYSICALLY attacked monster (player 14).
: and MISSED! No wait...TAIL HIT!
: Damage inflicted was 2200 points.

Round 1: Creature (Player 17) MENTALLY attacked monster (player 3).
: and HIT! Damage inflicted was 3000 points.
: THE MONSTER DISSOLVED WITH A FRUSTRATED SCREAM!

Round 2: Creature (Player 14) used a BREATH weapon against monster (player 17).
: and MISSED!

Round 2: Creature (Player 17) MENTALLY attacked monster (player 14).
: and HIT! No wait...
: Creature received another GUDGE for correct defense and MISSED IT!
: Damage inflicted was 3000 points.
: THE MONSTER DISSOLVED WITH A FRUSTRATED SCREAM!

Status

: Creature of Player 17 is in FAIR CONDITION.
: Creature of Player 3 has been DESTROYED!!!
: Creature of Player 14 has been DESTROYED!!!

A PLAYTESTER'S DELIGHT

A Review of A National Will

By Dan Kluge

Participating in a playtest is always, a gamble, especially if the company running it is little known or new. Such was the case when I was selected for Simcoarum Systems *A National Will* playtest in January of 1989. I beat the odds here and hit the jackpot. *A National Will* (abbreviated as ANW from here on) is one of the most interesting, challenging games of its kind that I have played in six of PBM gaming.

Its moderator, Mark Van Roosendaal is the most personable, professional, and competent moderator I have met. I have come to regard Mark as "just" another of the players instead of the moderator, and a good friend as well. I have yet to have this type of relationship with any other moderator. It's a true pleasure.

BACKGROUND OF ANW

ANW is intended to be an economic simulation of running a mythical country which the player gets to name. There is a military and navy as well, and they both play a large part in your success in ANW, but they are both tied into your economy. Combat is very simplified, but still strategically challenging. There are no lists of different types of armies, weapons, and ships to fret over. So if you are looking for an advanced war game, ANW is not it (stay turned for Simcoarum Systems GUNS OF '14 game-coming later this year. It is a WWI simulation based on the ANW system.)

OBJECT OF THE GAME

The object of ANW is to accumulate the highest total of Victory Points (see that section for specifics) without being knocked out of the game either due to economic collapse or the loss of all your original land areas (see Set-up section). Victory Points are based on your average standing in certain categories over the turns starting from Turn 3 until the end of the game-randomly picked by the computer to be somewhere between and including Turns 31 and 35. Turns are bi-weekly. Victory Points are also gained by the final results on the last turn in some categories.

SET-UP

When you sign up for ANW, you will receive a 42 page rule book, a map, set-up statistics, and any additions to the rules for the particular game.

The moderators are open to any type of rule or map change you may wish. The map that most games will be using is the so-called "Genesis Map". It will hold up to eleven players and contains neutral provinces as well, a new idea not included in the playtest. Sea and Land Areas are given names-these names just happen to be the names of some of the playtesters, (Kluge Sea was

named after me!) moderators, and other assorted names close to Simcoarum Systems heart. This is a wonderful touch!

Each player will have ten original land areas to start with. These areas comprise your country, and you must hold on to them at all costs, because each one you don't own at the end of the game means a loss of four points/land area lost.

Four out of the ten land areas will be Rough or Woods. These areas will have less acreage available for the growing of food than the other six land areas, which have no restrictions on them.

The map is also divided into various sea areas. You may only move your ships to one adjacent sea area/turn. Sea areas may be blockaded to prevent trade ships from reaching a country with trade goods. This is an important strategy come war time.

The rule book contains all the rules that are common for each game, as well as sample copies of turn results and entry forms with complete descriptions of each section on them both. At the back of the rulebook is Mark Van Roosendaal's tips for beginning players of ANW. They are also pretty useful to old veterans like me! Mark and the other moderators will help you with any problems you may have with the rules or turn results/entry sheets.

Each player is equal to one another at the start of the game. Each country will have:

- 1) 2,000 stored food points
- 2) 83 stored mining points
- 3) 190 mining points in the Money Base
- 4) 50 stored tech points
- 5) \$2,000 in the Treasury
- 6) Tax Rate at 20%
- 7) Labor is initially allocated as follows:
 - Agriculture Sector: 27,555
 - Mining Sector: 1,670
 - Industry: 1,670
 - Public Service: 2,505
 - Unemployment: 0
 - Military: 0
 - Total: 33,400
- 8) 4 ships in your navy

Each turn your country will gain (and occasionally lose) population due to a random birth and death rate which can be adjusted in certain ways detailed in the rulebook.

At this point you have to decide if you want to win the game economically, militarily, or a combination of the two. You should fill out your turn sheets according to the way you want to win (i.e. put more into the military if you want to be a military power, or more into the economic sectors if you want to win economically.)

LABOR SECTORS

Each turn you will put a number of labor you have gained from births into (or transferred from other) labor sectors. (See Turn Results Sheet-under Labor Allocation) Each sector has a formula that determines how much each labor you allocate to the sector will produce. Each sector performs a specific function with the exception of the Unemployment Sector. These unfortunates do nothing for you, and you must pay them Unemployment pay (\$1/person). This is the key area of the game. If you want to have a strong military, you will put more into the Military Sector and sacrifice the economic sectors. Do the opposite if you want a strong economy, but do not leave yourself open to an easy attack (alas, as I did in the playtest).

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Your people must have food to survive, right? Putting labor in this sector will allow food to be produced for your people. One food point feeds one person. So with your starting population of 33,400, you will need 33,400 food to feed them all, or you will find yourself in the woes of starvation. Labor will perish in numbers equal to the number of food points that country is lacking.

Each land area will have a certain amount of acreage that can be used each turn. The amount of acreage available can be increased through the use of tech points (see that section below). You also gain the acreage of other land areas you conquer, though not for two turns after the conquering.

It would be a wise idea to have a lot of food in storage or have a reliable trading partner when you want to become involved in a war, because you will want to devote your labor to the military sector, and your agricultural sector becomes the less important.

MINING SECTOR

Each land area contains a predetermined amount of three resources-oil, coal, and iron. These resources are used with labor to produce mining points. Each country's initial levels of resources are not the same as the other countries. One resource will be in short supply throughout the world.

Mining points are used in two ways: They can be used in the Industrial Sector to produce the all important Tech Points, or can be added to the Money Base.

The Money Base represents hard currency backing a country's money. The Money Base can be added to over the turns, and once mining points are placed there, they can not be removed.

The larger the Money Base you have, the better the exchange rate you will have with the other

countries. The exchange rate is shown as a ratio. For example if you have 400 mining points in your Money Base, and a country that wants money from you has 200 mining points in its Money Base, your exchange rate with that country will be 2 to 1. Therefore, if you sent \$100 to that country they will receive \$200 because of the exchange rate. The disadvantage is that you will receive less money, i.e., if the other player sent you \$100, you would only receive \$50.

It is important to have a high exchange rate because at the end of the game, the player with the best exchange rate will receive the most victory points. Obviously this is an important sector to those who want to win economically.

INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Tech Points are made from the labor and mining placed in this sector. Since Tech Points produced is one of the categories of the victory points, it is a crucial area for the economics-minded player. This sector requires more labor than the rest to produce one point. (25 labor and 1 mining point/tech point produced)

PUBLIC SERVICE SECTOR

The Public Service Sector represents government services such as internal security, public transportation, communication systems, etc. It brings advantages to the economy, but labor in this sector is paid a salary whereas the other sectors mentioned so far do not.

For every 5% of the total population allocated

to the Public Sector, various factors of the economy will improve-the production of mining points increases, and the Social Condition is lowered.

Social Condition is the well-being of your people. It is represented in decimal form. It starts at 1.6 and can move up or down due to a number of factors other than the % in the Public Sector. The lower the number, the more contented your people are.

Having a higher Social Condition will affect the money earned from taxes, and the performance of the military in battle, as well as other areas. Therefore it is important for those who want to go to war, and for those who want to build a strong economy to have the lowest Social Condition they can get. Social Condition is also one of the Victory Point categories.

Unemployment Sector

Labor will be placed in the Unemployment Sector when too much labor is placed in one of the other Sectors. Labor can be moved from this sector to the other sectors in the following turns. As stated elsewhere, you must pay \$1/labor placed in this sector.

MILITARY SECTOR

Obviously every country will need to defend itself. Putting labor in this sector will make that labor into an army. You must pay all labor in this sector a salary, so they are a drain on your economy. It will be a welcome drain if your army survives an attack. Labor in this sector may be

placed in the land area of your choice-as long as you own that land area. All areas, even the rough and woods areas, should be protected-more so if they are your original land areas.

There are a few pages of rules devoted to war in the rulebook, but since I never went to war (people went to war on me!) I didn't use these rules, and in all fairness cannot review them.

TECH POINTS

Tech(Technology Points) may be allocated to all sectors except the Public Service and Unemployment Sectors. They accumulate over time and provide benefits to each sector. Tech Points in the Agricultural Sector will increase food production and acreage available.

Tech Points allocated to the Mining Sector will increase the production of mining points. The production of Tech Points will increase if they are added to the Industrial Sector. Finally, Tech Points allocated to the Military Sector will increase the fighting quality of military labor. Tech Points are taken away from this sector when your military is involved in a war, or when you build ships. Tech Points Produced is another Victory Points Category.

TAXES

You are allowed to set a tax rate as a %. The sectors, except for the Military and Unemployment Sectors, are taxed on their wages, with the Industrial Sector being the sector with the highest wages. (\$5/labor) Tech Points are also Taxed, at

A NATIONAL WILL



"A National Will" is a computer moderated play-by-mail game where each player runs an economy of a country. Players make decisions on production, labor allocation, revenue, trade, ect. The strength of a country's military depends on the vitality of its economy.

To order the rule book and take your first turn, please send \$6.50 or \$3.00 for the book only with your name and address to

GRAND ALLIANCE



"Grand Alliance" is a fully computer moderated play-by-mail game which involves the battle of survival between human and alien races. Players represent either a member of the human race or of the alien race with the universe as a setting. The game is played on a map of three parallel levels where each level is composed of 240 planetary systems. Each player must solve military and political problems within their own camp before war can be waged effectively against the opposing race. Each side is faced with the same situations and problems to overcome.

To order the rule book and take your first turn, please send \$8.00 or \$2.00 for book only with your name and address to

Simcoarum Systems
P.O. Box 520861 • Salt Lake City, Utah 84152

Turn fees are \$3.50

Turn fees are \$3.00

an undisclosed rate.

You are allowed to spend more than your current Treasury balance, but if the deficit exceeds the amount earned from taxes for two consecutive turns, economic collapse, and removal from the game will occur.

TRADE/FOREIGN AID

All countries may trade with one another, the only exceptions being that you may not trade with one who had declared war on you (or vice versa), or those countries who have blockades set up against them (you must then have a 2 to 1 ratio in ships to those doing the blockade in order to break it and complete the trade).

Terms of the trade are left totally up to the players involved without interference from the moderator. There is no penalty for not living up to your trade agreement. Of course you risk war, and word getting out on your unfaithfulness to the other players.

The following items may be traded: money, mining and tech points, food, oil, coal, and iron. As long as you have enough of the item, you can trade it. They do not have to be traded on a 1 to 1 basis.

Foreign aid is a type of trade and follows the rules in the trade section of the rulebook. Foreign aid is given to a country involved in a war, usually to one that is losing, and is in danger of economic collapse, or the loss of the war. Any of the items listed above may be traded. Foreign aid is sent, not expecting to get something in return, (in most cases) at least until the end of the war. It's sole purpose

is to help a country win a war (or at least stay in it longer). Intelligent players will use foreign aid to prolong wars, so as to ultimately weaken all countries fighting, for greater periods of time, thereby hurting their averages in the economic Victory Point categories.

ESPIONAGE

Players may spy on all other countries without fear of the spy being caught. (One question does reveal who has been spying on your country that turn though). A list of 16 espionage questions are given with twelve of them costing \$250 and the remaining costing \$500. A player may ask up to four questions/turn. There is no chance of failure.

The questions run the gamut from finding out about various factors of a country's economy, to various factors of a country's military.

MESSAGES

Each player may send up to three messages/turn. Space is provided for them on the Entry form. Each message is limited to 200 characters (including spaces). You may send a message to all players or one specific player. One of your first messages to everybody should be your name, address, and phone number, because a player list is not provided, and 200 characters/message is not enough to discuss strategy with another country.

There is no regulations about sending false information in your message, though you can not send it anonymously or under another players

name. Messages cost nothing to send, and are often quite interesting and amusing.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Victory Points are gained (and lost) in five categories. Starting with Turn 3, players are told what their averages are in three categories—the other two are obvious from other parts of the turn results sheets. At the end of the game, you are given a number of victory points based on your average of three categories, and from the final result for the remaining two.

The three categories that deal with averages are:

- 1) The lowest Social Condition
- 2) The highest Treasury Balance
- 3) The most Tech Points produced

The two categories that are based on your final turn standings are: 1) The country with the best Exchange Rate will also get Victory Points, more so than those with a lesser Exchange Rate.

The #1 country in each of the above categories will receive 8 points, the #2 country will receive 7 points, and so on down to 1 point. 2) For each land area a country owns outside its original land areas, a player will receive two additional victory points/land area gained.

A player will LOSE four points/each original land area lost, so it is vital to keep them all.

The person with the most Victory Points wins. Of course any country that conquers all other countries will win automatically.

Field report from Group Commander Grishock:

The war against Seldonic's Saurons proceeds well. The introduction of assault armor with our powerful psychic blasts has produced a combination the enemy is hard pressed to overcome. The research efforts of our scientists have continually insured success in the campaign by giving us the technological edge. These overwhelming advantages have given me the chance to march upon the enemy's capital and destroy the unhuman scum.

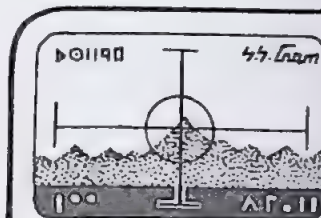
But the enemy has changed tactics, erecting forts and assembling pickets. This has slowed our progress and given them time to muster forces. My scouts inform me the unholy abominations intend to overrun us with superior numbers. Should we be unable to elude the assembled force, I petition to use the clans nukes to eradicate them.

Send For FREE Setup and Rules:



Out of the apocalypse came the 11th commandment:

Let no unhuman
scum walk
the Earth



MU-
TANT
KILL



PRECEDENCE

P. O. Box 27946 Tempe, AZ 82585-7946



PBM

PROBLEMS

Most problems (most notably an out of control Tech Points production formula) have been fixed due to the efforts of the playtesters. Only one problem that noticeably affects the game exists at this point. That is a lack of alliance system. This has hampered strategy between players who are working together against another country, no matter how close they have been working together. Mark has been informed of this problem, but he will not include ally rules until his World War I game comes out later this year. I think this is a mistake—it is needed in ANW.

Another problem, at least for me, is the vast amount of numbers and formulas in the rules, including some hidden from the players. I am terrible at even simple math, and at first I was overwhelmed with the math, and needed two or three letter exchanges with Mark before I got it all straightened out. You do need to understand some formulas so as to get the best possible results from some areas (production mostly), so those mathematically inadequate like me may find some problems here. A calculator is necessary, and Mark will always answer any questions you may have about the math.

For those who decide not to go to the war (like me), boredom may become a problem in later turns. I mean, figuring out what percentage to put in your Public Sector does get old after awhile. I suggested having random events or other activities. Mark has said he hoped upcoming changes will head off boredom—the only change I see along these lines is the addition of the neutral provinces. I think

more may be needed, but at the moment I can't think of any.

Although this does not affect the running of the game, I would like to know the effects the Social Condition has on my economy, and what the best ways to lower it are instead of seeing the results (and maybe even then not knowing much) after the fact. Since Social Condition is one of the Victory Point Categories, I think the players should know how to best use it. The other Victory Points Categories are straight forward, and Social Condition should be too.

I would also like to see the espionage area be a little more realistic. I think spies should have a small chance of being caught. If they are caught, a ransom can be offered, or the spy could be killed—causing the player to have to train a new one—for a price of course.

I believe that the costs for Espionage Questions (\$250 and \$500) is too low, and should be raised into the thousands. Spying is not an easy job, and they should demand big paychecks.

Finally, I think a players list with names, addresses, and phone numbers should be provided with the set-up turn. The messages should be used for game purposes only. I admit though that I would like to see a no diplomacy except through the message system of ANW. The number of messages allowed and/or their length would have to be increased for this though.

EVALUATION

A National Will has been the most successful

playtest that I have been involved with yet. Turns were rarely delayed, and then only by a few days. Turns did not need to be re-run due to computer bugs as well. Playtesters were given full consideration during the entirety of the game.

Players of ANW will find it to be a challenging game whether they go to war, build a strong economy, or both. The biggest challenge is indeed deciding which path to choose (personally I feel building a strong economy with no or as little warfare as possible is the way to go).

You will find yourself having to decide where to best put your labor to get the maximum effect from it. You will always have to keep an eye on your fellow players, not only in terms of Victory Points, but if they are secretly planning against you. Part of the fun of ANW is communicating with the other players through the Message system, phone calls, and letter writing, and is often part of the winning strategy.

If you can figure your way through the math and formulas, you will have little problem in understanding the rules, and if you get Mark Van Roosendaal as your moderator, you are in for a real treat—I guarantee it.

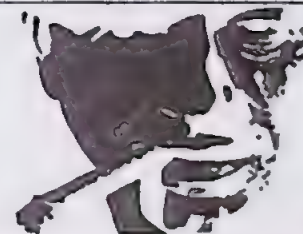
I think the game compares favorably to probably the #1 game of its type, *Feudal Lords*. That game has won a lot of awards, and I can see *A National Will* getting its fair share too—it deserves it!

NEWSLETTER, COSTS, ADDRESS

Simcoarum Systems puts out a FREE bi-monthly newsletter, running about five pages. It

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is quite unique. Some features that set it apart from others are its interviews of players instead of ANW's moderators, (I was the first honored, and I will get my revenge in an interview with Mark to be published in *Paper Mayhem* soon!) news from other companies including new games and playtests they are offering, an interview with a moderator from another company (James Eckert of *Eckert Gaming Group*), strange little "in-messages" that

I have no idea of their meaning, but they sure are fun to read, and some interesting facts about World War I for the upcoming *Guns of '18*, game. Of course it contains strategy articles, company news, and letters to the editor. Mark has also written articles on his thoughts on the PBM industry that are fun and interesting to read, as well as causing some controversy with some people out there!

A National Will is also one of the cheapest games

out on the market today. Turns cost \$3.50, and a rule book \$3.00. I doubt prices will go up soon. Simcoarum Systems also offers a science-fiction game, *Grand Alliance*. You can write to Simcoarum Systems at P.O. Box 520861, Salt Lake City, Utah 84152. Do me a favor--tell him it was the review in *Paper Mayhem* that interested you in the game.

Portion of National Will Turn Sheet

A NATIONAL WILL

Results Form for Country: 7
Country: MARTHAGEDON
Account Number: 7

Due Date: 05-AUG-89
Game: 6 Turn: 18
Old Balance \$ 9.50
Turn Charge \$ 3.50
New Balance \$ 6.00

M. LAJUNTA
123 Any Street
Cummings, CO 80401

POPULATION

Births	3420	Labor gained by Capture	0
Deaths	1803	Labor lost by Capture	0
		Starvation	0
Net Additions	1617		

ECONOMICS

LABOR ALLOCATIONS

	Current	Production-Caused Unemployment	Starvation, Excessive Deaths	Combat Losses
Agriculture	28319	0	0	0
Industry	1500	0	0	0
Military	3667	N/A	0	N/A
Mining (Production)	1890	243	0	0
Resources (Oil)	0	0	0	0
Resources (Coal)	120	0	0	0
Resources (Iron)	40	0	0	0
Public Service	187	N/A	0	0
Unemployment	5343	N/A	0	0
Total	41066		0	0

MINING POINT ALLOCATIONS

	Allocated	Consumed	Returned To Storage
Industry	210	60	150
Money Base (total)	500		

TECH POINT ALLOCATIONS

Agriculture	146	Industry	123
Military	12.1	Mining	76

INTERVIEW WITH MARK VAN ROOSENDAAL

By Dan Kluge

In reading past interviews of moderators in Paper Mayhem, I have noticed that the majority of the interviews are on well-known moderators, or the moderators of well-known and popular games. Well, I think the lesser-known moderators and companies deserve the same honor. (I don't know if Mark would call it an honor!)

One of the most deserving in my opinion is Mark Van Rosendaal of Simcoarum Systems. He has proven to be one of the most (if not the most) competent and friendliest moderators I have come across in my six years of PBM gaming. In addition, he has written some very though provoking articles (for the company newsletter) on many facets of the PBM industry. They should be heard and read by other than Simcoarum Systems' customers.

For more information on Simcoarum Systems games, or to get a copy of the latest newsletter (They're free!) write to: Simcoarum Systems, P.O. Box 520861, Salt Lake City, Utah 84152. I guarantee you won't be disappointed.

Finally, I want to thank Mark for consenting to do this interview, and finding time in his busy schedule to do it. Also, I want to let two "invisible" partners of Simcoarum, Kirk Van Rosendaal, and Craig Cheney, know that their work on Simcoarum's games is very much appreciated. Thanks guys!

Kluge:1) Age? Married? Children?

Van Rosendaal: I'm 35 and single. I'm not sure whether there is a woman who could stand my schedule. However, I don't want to grow old alone so I suspect that I will marry someday.

K: 2) What was your background in PBM gaming, before you started Simcoarum?

V: None. I joined a game called "Manifest Destiny" back in 1983. The game never made it to its first turn. The game did expose me to the concept of PBM gaming. At the time I was designing A NATIONAL WILL, I played Starlords and some of Global Supremacy. My background was very weak in those beginning days.

K: 3) How, when, and why did you create Simcoarum Systems?

V: I've always wanted to design a commercial game. After seeing the PBM format I was convinced of the method. All I had to go on was "Manifest Destiny". I could not see how that game could make money. It was very obvious that any game I did in a PBM format would have to be computerized. I had no money to pay for programming so I convinced Kirk and Craig to join me as partners. Simcoarum Systems was formed in 1984 and our first game was released in August 1988.

K: 4) What did (do) you think you could (can) offer PBM'ers?

V: In the beginning I thought that we would be offering gamers another format of playing games. Originally we were going to market our games to wargamers. You can imagine how our thinking changed when we realized that an entire PBM market already existed. Now, I'd say we offer PBM'ers games that have not been influenced by the designs of other PBM games. We are unique in that way. Simcoarum probably stands very high in programming expertise. Though we are learning how to compete, we do run our games on time and pride ourselves on accuracy.

K: 5) What do you do for fun besides PBM gaming?

V: I love camping and fishing in those Utah mountains. Utah is the best kept secret in this country for its beauty. I am still exploring this state - it never ceases to amaze me.

K: 6) Do you play in any other PBM games? Which is your favorite? Why?

V: I play in one other PBM game other than my own designs. I have not played many games so I don't have a favorite. I will say that DEATH & SORROW by Eckert Gaming Group will keep me

entertained for the next year or so. The reason I'm playing D & S is because the game was built for fun. It was the author's number one intention for this design.

K: 7) What is your idea of a perfect PBM game?

V: Hard question. It would be easy to say why I don't like certain games. I think it is a question of not compromising. For example, an artist can only come close to his true inspiration by never compromising his work. Perfection, in the human sense, is realizing an intention. It is the basic thing that makes it worthwhile. Money is a nice benefit. A PBM Game is only as good as the realization of the author's intention. If the author compromises his concepts, say by looking at what he thinks is marketable, you get an average game.

K: 8a) Do you think that you're the exception rather than the rule when it comes to moderating?

V: I am unable to compare myself with other moderators since I do not know them. I figure that Simcoarum clients have the power to vote (with their money) on whether my moderation of the games is good or not.

K: 8b) What do you think a moderator's responsibilities are to his/her customers?

V: I was wondering when you would ask me an easy question. The responsibilities of a moderator are 1) process turns on time, 2) process turns accurately, 3) respond to player's questions, 4) rule on player disputes, and 5) represent the company.

K: 9) Do you think being a PBM game moderator/owner is more, less, or equally demanding as any other owner of a small business? Does it take up too much time in your life?

V: Any small business is demanding on an owner. PBM moderation is not an exception with regards to the work involved. It is a matter of what one wants to do. It does take up almost all of my free time, but it doesn't matter. I enjoy this kind of work. It has become a part of my life.

K: 10) Give a brief description of your currently running games. What's in the works for 1990?

V: GRAND ALLIANCE: GA is our first commercial game. Though its setting is space, it is a game which requires cooperation and team spirit among its players. Its foundation is from wargaming and has chess-like thinking in its play. The game is divided into two camps, Humans and Aliens, where each side attempts to defeat the other. The game is basic, easy, and challenging. It is my favorite to play of the two commercial games.

A NATIONAL WILL: ANW is a game which

attempts to show how a military depends upon economic strength. This game is highly diplomatic and is of medium complexity. The center of the game lies in its economic system. ANW has gotten away from a production point system seen in almost all other games of its genre and instead uses an economic model. The game is unique in other ways. It provides the concepts of supply, free trade, naval blockades, and a sense of national morale.

Works in progress: We are currently working on two other games (easy when Simcoarum has two programmers). FREEDOM (the hard way) is due to be playtested early summer and which I won't say much about. And GUNS OF 14, the European campaign of WW1, based on the ANW system, is currently being researched and developed.

K: 11) Do you think your games are better than other games of their sort or mostly unique? Why should a PBM gamer choose your games over others?

V: I've never thought to compare our games against their games. We design and program games in our fashion and style. I don't really look at how someone is doing this or that because I don't care. I get an idea in my head and I have to do it no matter what anyone else is doing. The only un-unique games in the hobby are the ones that take ideas from others in a wholesale way. A gamer will choose our games because they like the way we did them. They like our designs and our "style". In the long term, I cannot convince PBM gamers to choose our games over others with marketing and talk - they have to choose our games for what they are. There is no other way.

K: 12) Do you think a moderator should play in his/her own game? Why or why not?

V: I do. When I play my own games I am no longer a moderator, but a player. I design games that I would enjoy playing so I do it when it is possible. Also, I like to see my games from a player's point of view so I am able to understand clearly player suggestions and comments. Designing a game and never playing it can color a designer's viewpoint when considering suggestions and changes. I usually will stick to playtests and private games.

K: 13) You've had some pretty interesting things to say on the backstabbing issue. What's your feelings about it?

V: We have batted the subject of backstabbing around in our newsletter. Backstabbing is not a

moral issue for the primary reason that most game mechanics allow for this action. Therefore, backstabbing is not subject to any kind of code of ethics as I've seen suggested. It would be impossible to implement anyway. The source of backstabbing lay in the mechanics of a game's rules or upon a moderator.

Backstabbing is a type of play and may even be considered as a strategy towards winning. In my experience, however, most players tend to shy away from backstabbing due to their attempts to establish a reputation.

K: 14) What are your feelings on playtesters? Are they trustworthy and responsible? Should they have to pay for the playtest? Why or why not, and how much should they pay. Should they be rewarded for their work. Why or why not, and how should they be rewarded?

You have more questions there than a Trivia quiz card! We've had very good luck with playtesters. The playtester is an important part of game development. In essence, we do not charge playtesters for playing. The very act of their participation is a great service to us. It's a deal, we don't charge and they play an underdeveloped game. We treat playtest games as we would a commercial game - we try to run it on time and be accurate with the turns. Feedback and suggestions

are a very natural consequence of a playtest game. We benefit greatly from player suggestion and include many of them.

K: 15) I was surprised and honored to be the subject of the first player interview in your company newsletter (I'm getting my revenge here!). I'm unaware of any other company that does this. Why do you do this?

V: The very foundation of PBM gaming is not the big companies, publications, or other organizations. It is the gamer. The gamer is the core of the hobby. A gamer's opinion is more important than my own with regards to the hobby we service. How can I not tap into such a great source of opinion and thought? It is probably the best decision I ever made with the newsletter. Besides, most other newsletters I've seen read like a computer manual. I wanted something more.

K: 16) Your newsletter is pretty unique in other areas. You have news from other companies, and soon an interview with a moderator from another company. What's your thoughts on why you put these in the newsletter? What else can we expect to find in them?

V: About 1/4 of our sign-ups are new to the PBM hobby. I'm not going to isolate them. They should be aware that a whole hobby exists and that there are many choices. I might not be able to offer what

they want, but I can point them in the right direction. I have referred several players to other companies due to this. It is important to Simcoarum that newcomers remain in the hobby. I'll try to pick them up later when we offer a product which fits their taste.

Secondly, I wanted an open newsletter. It would be boring to our readers to only direct the newsletter on how Simcoarum is doing this or that and how great we are doing. No thanks. There is just too much going on in the hobby, too much opinion, and many great people to just concentrate on Simcoarum.

Lastly, I write the newsletter, not only to support our games but for my own pleasure. The feedback I get on the newsletter surprises me. There is a satisfaction in it. The newsletter is also a form of advertising for us. The past three issues is responsible for more sign-ups than all of our advertising combined (and we spend alot on ads.)

What can be expected in the future. The newsletter is still an amateur publication. I'm still learning. I want to increase its size someday and improve its look. Content-wise, I want to include more articles on different facets of the hobby such as the small piece we did on "Personalities".

K: 17) Is Simcoarum Systems a thriving company? Is it really possible to make big profits from running a PBM company?

V: I'll never say that it hasn't been a hard road to travel. When we released GRAND ALLIANCE we hardly knew a soul. It took us eight months to start our first commercial game. How's that for honesty? We never had (or have) any plans of giving up. Things are much better now. Our games are starting more often after a year and half of bleakness. We now are breaking even and expect 1990 to be our first profitable year. We carry no debt and own all our equipment. We are here to stay so others might as well sign and count us in. Sorry.

Can you make big profits at this? I don't know but we are trying.

K: 18) Do you think there are areas not yet covered in a PBM game? If so, what are they, and are you going to tackle them?

If it is one thing I learned about this hobby it is that for every gamer out there, a concept for a game is rolling around inside. Game-wise, the number of game subjects and concepts isn't scratched.

With regards to Simcoarum, GUNS OF 14 is our attempt to develop a military simulation as opposed to the ones on the market. I'm looking for a simulation rather than a game. Of course, another area which has relatively few games are the non-combat type such as Continental Rails, by Graaf Simulations. We have no plans yet to develop a game which has no combat.

K: 19) What do you think is the #1 problem with the PBM industry, as it stands today? What solutions do you have for this problem?

The number one problem with the PBM industry today is the hobby's inability to describe and define the PBM process or sequence of events to

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those outside the hobby and why it works. It hasn't been enough to say "games played by mail." To someone outside the hobby, the idea of receiving a turn every two weeks find it difficult to imagine its enjoyment. Anyone outside the hobby reading a PBM ad, no doubt, has difficulty understanding how a game is set up and operated. For example, an ad in a non-trade publication may say that a game has 1500 planets and 50 different types of ships will mean little to an outsider. There is a problem of properly informing those outside our hobby.

Simcoarum responds to those who reply to our ads in non-trade publications differently than we do with those within the hobby. Thus far, our only solution has been to provide a four page text which describes the hobby.

Off the top of my head, one possible solution would be to get a number of companies together who offer introductory PBM games and publish a manual which would describe the hobby and its process adequately with descriptions of games that are easy for a newcomer to bite into. This manual would be free and distributed with the non-trade publications. Only introductory games would be used so that new sign-ups and joiners can get a feel for our hobby.

K: 20) Do you think your players really know how to play your games? Are there areas or ideas that no player has ventured into yet?

V: I have yet to win one of my own games. I am

either not a great gamer or Simcoarum players know the games. There are many players with us that I would never make the claim of being better than. Any advantage that I have from being the designer is quickly vanishing.

PBM players are a clever lot. They keep coming up with ways of gaining an advantage through nifty useage of a game's mechanics. I suspect this will continue.

K: 21) Do you have any humorous stories about running a PBM company, or in-game events that you care to relate?

I have many players who will call or write me and tell me what they are up to in a game. All too often a player will describe an action they are involved in and the reason why they are doing it. Usually within the week, other players who were affected by those acts will explain to me what they believe is going down and what they intend to do about it. So often, the players who are reacting are basing their conclusion upon partial or false information and will do something in left field. Personally, this kind of thing cracks me up. Though this humor is personal, I gain a great deal of fun knowing both sides of a story where truth is hard to get at.

K: 22) What do you think are the best moves or strategies you've seen in GRAND ALLIANCE and A NATIONAL WILL?

V: In the newsletter, I stick to general strategies. Players often relay to me some of the best strategies

in a game. I just don't pass these on. Players who work at developing ingenious strategies should keep the right to use their information as they see fit.

K: 23) Finally, one question that's been bugging me since I first joined the playtest of A NATIONAL WILL. Where in the heck did you come up with Simcoarum Systems as the name of your company?

V: We originally wanted the name Simcoar, however the knotheds of Business Registration of Utah would not allow us to keep it. It is a conglomerate of the words (Sim)ulated (Co)mputer W(ar). We added the word "um" (latin which means the original meaning) and Systems to get the name approved by the bureaucrats.

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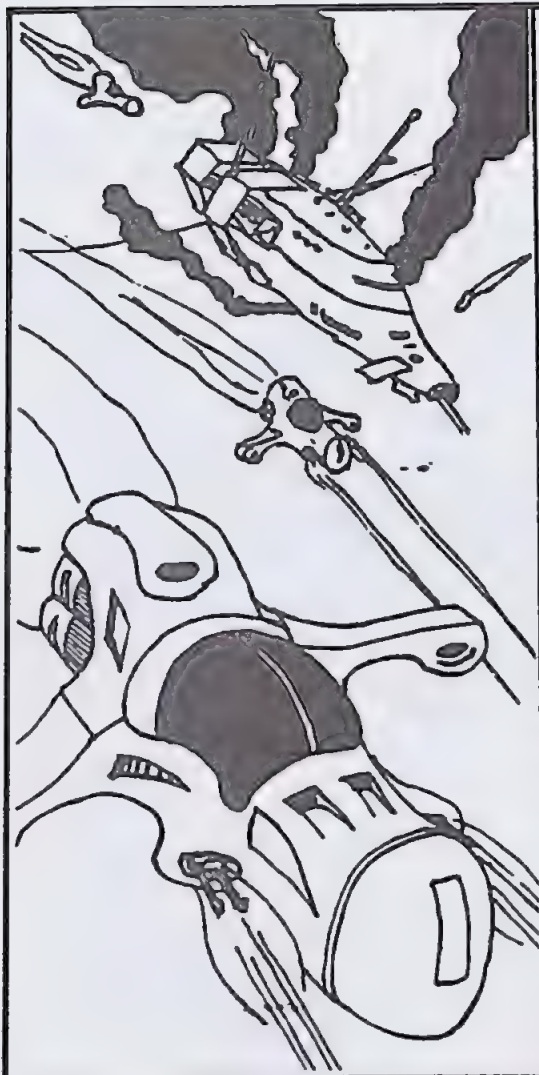
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DEATH & SORROW A REVIEW

By Phil Chenevert

You should know that I joined Death & Sorrow as an afterthought. D & S had a cute name and was ridiculously cheap...something I find strangely attractive in a game. I have now joined my 4th game of D & S.

Death & Sorrow is a low cost, low to moderately complex PBM game set in an age when the world was ruled by Infantry and Cavalry. Each player is one of 15 or so rulers that begin in one of the 115 provinces on the wrap-around map. You must then direct your armies, oversee your economic growth, conquer more provinces and defend your expanding empire. With a name like "Death & Sorrow", the more morbid and/or sadistic among you might gleefully imagine that at last a PBM game had emerged that dealt with ravaging and torture. Well, fortunately, it ain't so. The title comes from a quote by Winston Churchill at the beginning of WWII: "Death & Sorrow will be the companions of our journey; hardship our grament; constancy and valor our only shield. We must be united, we must be undaunted, we must be inflexible."

However, flexibility is of importance in this game. Each player begins with 100 infantry and 50 cavalry that are to be used in conquering surrounding provinces so your empire can grow. With each newly conquered territory comes more recruits, more money and more food. With these new resources you can expand your domain even further, right? Wrong. There are 14 other players spread out over 115 provinces that are as cunning and devious as you. OK, so maybe they aren't as devious and certainly not as cunning as you, they nevertheless have spies, infantry and the most deadly foe on the planet - cavalry, trying to take what every other player has worked so hard to get.

D & S is more than just about fighting, it is strategy, tactics and diplomacy. Every horse must be fed and soldier paid or desertion is certain. Diplomacy is of importance because up to three players can win the game if they control 90% of the provinces. One player can win by taking half of the provinces, a difficult task indeed. Diplomacy has been a most pleasant surprise in such a low cost game. There is much skillful communication in all my games. Let me give a simplified overview of the rules and then describe the initial four turns in my first game.

Provinces: There are 115 of these spread out over a wraparound map that stays the same for every game. A sample map should be printed in this article. Each province has a population that can be drafted into your armies, a food and gold production level, and is either a wilderness, a village or a city state. The gold and food production is obviously for your central treasury to use in paying the troops and feeding your cavalry's horses. The

population determines how many new soldiers can be drafted each turn from that province and grows a bit each turn unless constant recruiting makes it drop. Each province begins as a "wilderness" (except your home province) and may be improved into first a village, and finally into a city/state by investing a certain amount of gold in it. The major consideration here is the defensive value of the different types of terrain; wilderness gives the defenders a 50% bonus, villages give no bonus at all and city/states give a 100% bonus.

Troops: There are two types of troops: infantry and cavalry (infantry on horses). Infantry do what they have done throughout the ages slog into battle, fight and die. They are also slow and they smell funny. Cavalry on the other hand are great, being twice as fast as infantry and doing 50% more damage. Plus of course, the horses smell better and have better manners than your average foot soldier.

The Turn: Each turn covers three months of game time and each month is handled individually for combat purposes. This means that your move must send orders to the troops for all three months without knowing what will happen in the first month. This set up allows Death & Sorrow to use their unique "Reserve" system whereby you may designate an army as "reserve" and it still will rush to the aid of other provinces if they are attacked. This allows much greater flexibility in defending your territory since an invader may attack a border province which he knows is only lightly defended only to be met in the second month by a much larger reserve army which valiantly rushed to the aid of the beleaguered province. Take that, you vile aggressor!

SET-UP

On start up I found myself in province 30 with an army of 100 infantry and 50 cavalry. My treasury had 200 gold and 300 food. Spies had reported that three of the contiguous provinces were all independent wildernesses and had armies of 49, 52 and 43 infantry respectively waiting to defend them. Being your basic wild eyed, blood thirsty, power mad (yet sensitive and wise) despot, I naturally sneered at wasting good gold that had been gouged from my population on developing my province and instead spent every cent on buying horses to make my infantry into cavalry. Therefore we sold all 300 food and generated 75 gold (4 food make 1 gold). This added to my initial 200 gold meant we could buy 55 horses. We recruited the maximum from our one province (38 new infantry), bought 55 horses and then split our forces into 3 forces, each having some infantry and some cavalry and sent them into province 105, 48, and 91, then sat back expecting great things. Two 1 man scout

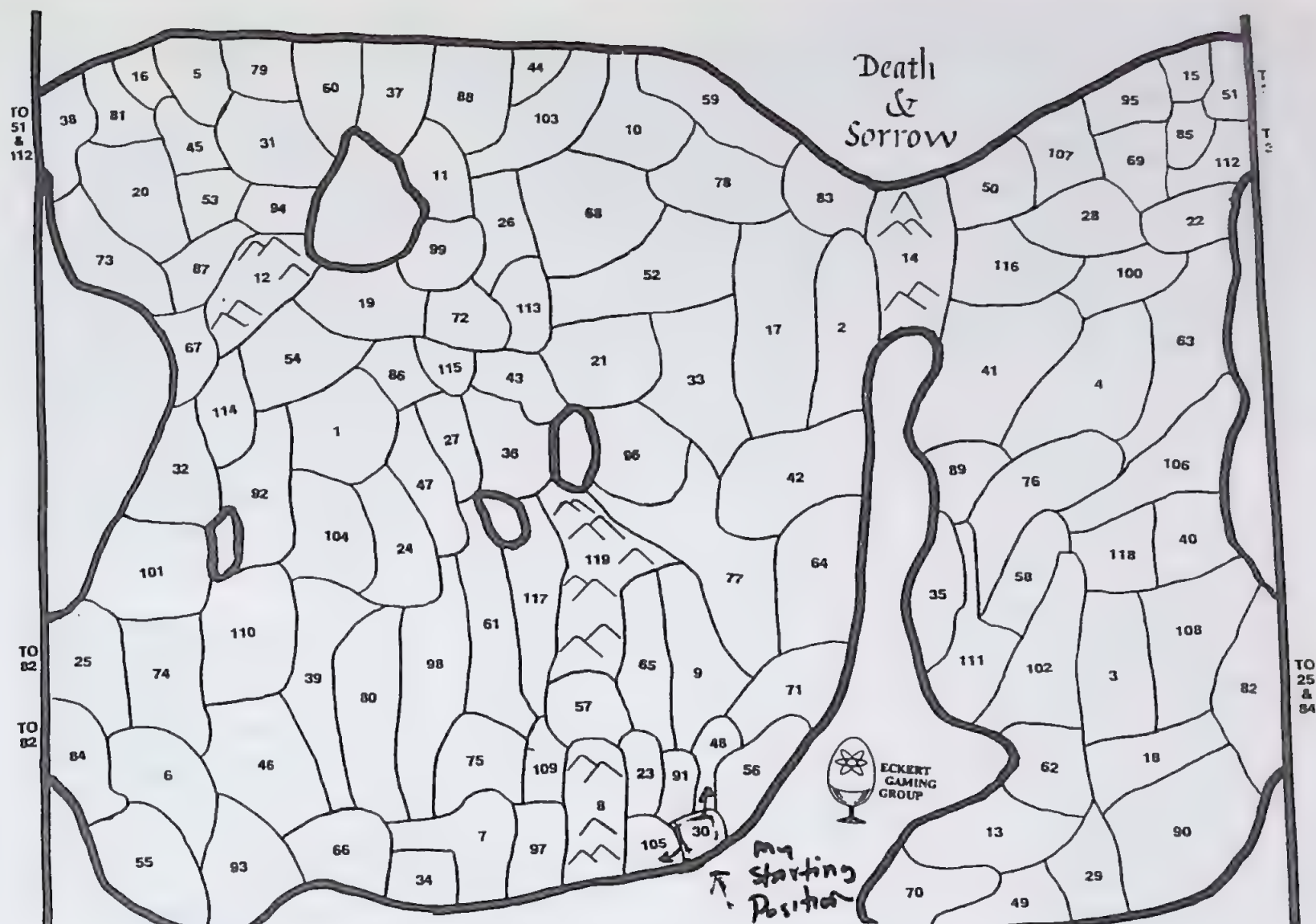
armies were also sent out. Well that was the LAST time I made that mistake! By mixing my armies I effectively wasted a whole month of fighting by slowing down the cavalry to the pace of the infantry. Since an army moves at the speed of the slowest group (infantry!), they all dawdled along, not arriving in the neighboring provinces until the second month. Oh yes, it take infantry two months to enter a wilderness. By luck alone we managed to defeat all the enemy in provinces 48 and 105 but found our armies still locked in combat in province 91 at the end of third month. This taught me another important lesson in this game; make sure you capture a province when you go into it because not doing so denies you the gold and food production, plus ties up your forces until it is captured. And of course while they are fighting, they must be paid and fed.

Diplomacy: I sent DM cards to the players numbered 11 thru 16 giving my home province number and home address. I don't recommend giving out your home province but I felt reckless at this time.

Turn 1 results - We were now the proud owners of three provinces: 30, 48, and 105. Of the three spy reports possible, one had failed (25% chance), another had been my mistake and the third reported that province 23 was independent and defended by 44 infantry. The total economy under the good guys control (me) was 269, meaning that my three provinces would produce that much gold during normal turns (Winter and Spring) if they remained under civilian control. During the Summer turn provinces produce twice as much if you put them under civilian control. During the Fall turn they produce four times as much. Since the next turn would be Fall all three provinces were changed to civilian control to get the most gold possible. There is a drawback to civilian control since horses cost twice as much and you may only recruit 5% of your population in a province or half the number available under military control.

Plans & Schemes: We sold all 79 food in our stockpiles for 19 gold which added to the 111 available which allowed us to buy 26 more horses.

By recruiting all 65 available men from my three provinces, I made several more armies and made a coordinated attack on province 91 where my main forces were pinned in battle. After this they were to move NE into province 71. Obviously nothing was left behind to defend any of my holdings...everything went into offense. Onwards! Oh yes, I also sent several 1 man scout armies over the mountains into province 8 to scout 97 and 109. Only infantry can travel through mountains and they take attrition each month. Hopefully, a 1 man army will be too small to be damaged.



RESULTS of 2nd turn.

We did it! Now that I'm learning more about how to maneuver armies, it doesn't seem so difficult to plan. Province 91 and 71 both fell under our benevolent rule this turn. Our victorious armies continue to grow in strength: 92 cavalry and 97 infantry. Our treasury has grown also, now having 341 gold and 401 food ready to be used. Yes, it pays to acquire provinces!

Plans & Schemes: First of course I will sell all that food. Technically I suppose we should hold some back to feed the horses in case disaster strikes but I plan to keep capturing provinces and the added income and food will take care of next month's problems. That gave us enough money to buy 88 more horses this turn and continue our push to the north. Oh yes, by looking at the map you may notice that I am bypassing province 56. This is deliberate since my plans are to push north as fast as possible before the other players push south. Also, I received a nice post card from player 16 telling me his home province is 64 and that he is dropping since he missed the first turn!! Wow, Oh Joy! Oh Happiness! And so close to me. A home province is worth four times as much as any regular province. Once again the wisdom of sending diplomatic messages is proven. Because he got my note, he knew my address and how close I was to

him. The only discordant note in this pean of joy is a note from the gamemaster this turn saying that dropped home provinces will recruit the maximum each turn to make them harder to capture. That doesn't seem like much discouragement, but why does he have to wise up now?!

Anyway, I'll scout 64 but send my eager armies against provinces 9 and 77 this turn.

Turn 3 results: Good news (and bad news). We liberated provinces 77 and 9 as planned but ran into our first 'enemy'...player #2. Luckily I sent out a few more DMs last turn to some of the players and he was one so he gave me a phone call. Both he and I had forces in province 77 but I had more left after we had killed all the independent troops so the province was given to me, even though #2 still had 71 infantry and 19 cavalry there. We quickly agreed to a non-aggression pact wherein he granted me province 77 and below while I gave him everything above it. This was not an alliance, but I still felt good about trusting him. Elsewhere, we found out that province 64 (the home province) now had 175 infantry and 50 cavalry defending it. After long debate my Joint Chiefs of Staff (a six pack) convinced me to forget about taking 64 and instead make a 180 degree turn and head all our forces south and west. Instead of destroying most

of our forces taking one province they could be better utilized to take four or more. Thus, our 164 cavalry and 91 infantry, with 205 more cavalry added this turn, received orders to head towards 65 and 56 and 23, destroy the independent infantry there and increase our holdings to 10 provinces next turn.

Hopefully my use of the bonus for attacking from several provinces will help. Diplomatically I received contact from player #8 who said he was located in the South West. We hit it off fine and agreed to be allies.

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Turn 4 results:

Well, it wasn't a perfect turn, but darned near it! Our forces took provinces 65 and 23 but just missed in 56 by two infantry! Somehow I misjudged that battle. It is time to explain that simultaneous assault bonus mentioned above. When you attack a province from more than one province in the same month, the second largest army has its attack factors increased 50%. If you have another force attacking from a third province, its attack factors are increased by 100%; attacking from a fourth province at the same time gives a 150% increase and so forth up to a maximum of 6 provinces. Anyway, my status is fine after 4 turns; we own 9 provinces, have 341 cavalry and 59 infantry awaiting our command, and about 300 gold to spend. There may be a problem back in 77; I just left a one man army to watch the border but player #2 apparently "forgot" to withdraw his troops. Hopefully he isn't planning to pull a fast one. Think I'll rush a few guys back there just in case.

Plans and Schemes for turn 5; First I will change all my provinces back to civilian control to get the most money possible when the summer rolls around next turn. Next I'll draft 77 more men but not buy any horses because of my severe gold shortage. Also I will build provinces 9, 65, 71 and 105 into villages.

My invincible hordes were sent flying into province 57, the gap between the mountains to my West. On the chance that they would capture it in month 1 or 2, they had orders to proceed into 109 and the 61.

Turn 4 results: Great news! Our 300 cavalry smashed province 57 in one month and proceeded into 109 where they brushed aside the 62 defenders in month two and proceeded into 61, capturing it from player #6. OK, so it was undefended, they still took it. So we added 3 more provinces this turn, bringing our empire to 13 provinces! On the Eastern front, player #2 finally withdrew his troops saying it was an order writing error on his part and I believe him.

Well, that should give you some flavor of the game. I have continued the good pace in this game and (with my allies) plan to win in about 8 more turns. I'm being crushed in another game of D & S so just knowing what to do does not make it easy to win.

Some Semi-Precious Nuggets of Information for those who may play D & S:

1. Divide your armies; put cavalry into one and infantry into another so that your cavalry is not slowed down by those pokey foot soldiers.
2. When sending out your conquering armies give them orders for all three months even though you feel sure they will be stopped in the first province. Just in case they finish early, they can then move on and do more damage.
3. Buy cavalry. They are faster and more dangerous (and they smell better)
4. Make spare armies. I found it very convenient to have 'spare' armies to use as scouts, stay in con-

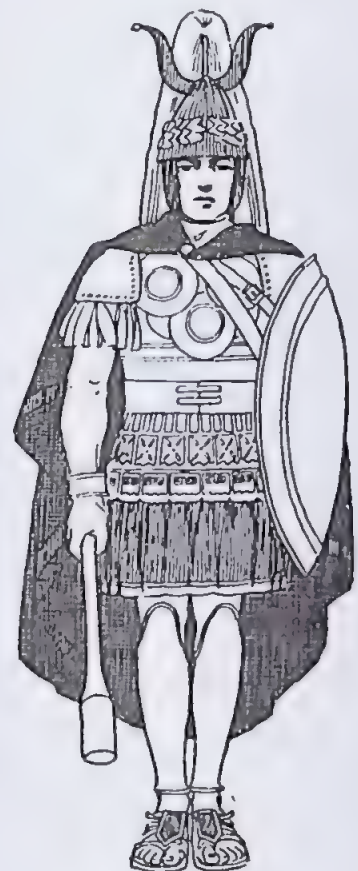
quered provinces, and give me more flexibility in orders.

5. If you are a Domination player, forget the notion about armies being stronger as they get older. Armies are throw-aways in this game.

6. It is probably more useful to buy horses with your money in the early stages than to start building your home province.

7. When attacking independent provinces, it is possible to predict how many enemy troops your forces can destroy in each month, within about 5%. Multiply your cavalry x 1.5 and multiply your infantry x 1. Add the result together and this is the number of attack "points" which your forces will do that month. Divide this number by 4, then by 1.5 if the province is a wilderness. The resulting number is the number of independent infantry killed that month. You should attempt to capture a province the same month you attack it, otherwise your forces are tied down at the beginning of the next turn. There is a small random factor built into the casualty computation but it seems to be less than 4%.

Death & Sorrow is run by Eckert Gaming Group, P.O. Box 16384, Rochester, NY 14616. You can enter a game for \$5 which includes the first three turns. After that turns cost \$2 each (that's right, two bucks!) until turn 10 when they zoom to \$2.50. Turns run quite regularly about every 18 days. The only extra cost that I know of is the time spent tossing and turning, figuring out my next turn.



DEATH & SORROW

By Robert Bost

Death & Sorrow is a PBM game set in a medieval setting. The map consists of 115 clear provinces and 4 mountain provinces. Each of the 15 players start with a village in a clear province and at least 2 provinces away from any other player. The goal of the game is to capture half of the clear provinces. Alliance wins are possible with 2 players needing $\frac{2}{3}$ of the provinces and 3 players needing 90%. The game is easily understood and is an excellent game for beginning PBM players while still offering the complexities of strategy to keep experienced players happy. The rule book is 26 pages and comes with several examples to aid in understanding. Turns consist of a 3-month season where armies can move during each month of the season.

Provinces

There are three types of clear provinces: Wilderness, Village and City-State. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages. Wilderness are undeveloped lands which take longer to move through and give the defender a 50% bonus. This can be very helpful on your frontiers to slow an advancing army. The disadvantage is that they grow at the slowest rate.

Villages grow at a better rate but lose the advantage of the defensive bonus. They are twice as fast to move through allowing your forces to travel further. Unfortunately, it also allows your attackers to travel further.

The final type, City-State, offers the best of both. It is as fast as Villages when moving through, but provide a 100% defensive bonus due to fortified city. They also grow at the fastest rate.

All player provinces begin as Villages with non-player provinces as Wilderness. Provinces can be developed over several turns to make Wilderness into Villages, and then into City-States. It is usually unwise to build Villages on your frontier because of the loss of defensive bonus, and building a City-State there will only invite a quick assault from your neighbor.

The final province type is mountains. These can be crossed by infantry but can not be captured. The infantry crossing will take losses based on the season while it travels across. While the combination of infantry only and suffering losses makes going over mountains slow and costly, the surprise value can make it worthwhile.

Control

There are two types of control for each province, Military and Civilian. Each has advantages and disadvantages and can be controlled separately for each province.

Military control has the slowest growth and the lowest tax multiplier (nobody likes dictators). There are several major advantages though to compen-

sate. Building a province up in class is 50% more effective, horses can be bought at half price, and more of the population can be drafted into your armies.

Civilian control gives better growth and a higher multiplier for taxes but suffers from higher costs. It is very common for provinces to float from Military to Civilian and back as needed. As an example, the summer and fall seasons normally find provinces under civilian control to gain from taxes. These are then spent during the winter and spring seasons under military control. Once a City-State is built it should always be kept civilian to gain from the growth bonus.

Units

There are only two types of units to consider in Death & Sorrow: Infantry and Cavalry. Infantry are your basic troop and take twice as long to move as cavalry. This translates to 2 months for a Wilderness province and 1 month for Village and City-State (Mountains require 4 months to cross). Infantry can be raised at each of your provinces based on the population and type of control.

To convert infantry into cavalry, you buy horses in the same province and they are automatically cavalry. Cavalry move at double the speed in infantry, have at least 50% better offensive and are twice as hard to kill.

Combat

Combat can occur in any month that forces are not formally allied in the same province. Once combat begins, it will not end until all of one sides armies are either destroyed or withdraw. Withdraw can only be done to another province you or an ally control. Because of this rule, and a rule allowing reserve armies, it is quite possible for an army to be trapped into a battle it can't get out of. I discovered this tactic the hard way as I watched a lightning thrust turn into a surrounded force. My troops withered away like the Wicked Witch of the West.

There are combat advantages to attacking the same province from more than one direction. For each province you attack from, the attacking armies gain combat bonuses to stimulate the dividing of the defenders forces to meet you.

Independent provinces start with a random number of infantry and then grow at 5 per turn. This may not sound like much, but combined with the 50% bonus for Wilderness, a province not conquered by turn 10 can be nasty!

Recommendations

There are several keys to the game which make your forces better. The first is the cavalry always provide more bang for the buck. You should always mount as many of your troops on horses as funds

allow. If you have infantry that can't be mounted, maintain them in separate armies from your cavalry. There is no benefit from combined armies and you lose the cavalries advantage of speed.

When the computer is paying and feeding your troops, it starts with Army #1 and works down. For this reason, it is advisable to keep your cavalry in lower numbered armies and your infantry in the higher ones. This insures your cavalry will be paid and fed first. If infantry is not paid, the soldiers go home, if cavalry is not paid they go home with those expensive horses!

Look! Many players keep their initial army together and move into one province on the first turn. If a player recruits the maximum, buys as many horses as possible, and then divides it into 4 armies, 2 provinces can be captured on the first turn. Two of these armies would have the cavalry split between them with the other two being the infantry. Send a cavalry and an infantry army into each of 2 provinces. The cavalry gets there first and starts whittling down the defenders. When the infantry arrives the second month, the combined forces will be able to capture the province.

Talk! Send out 3 x 5 cards to everybody. Even if they are not near you, they may be able to provide helpful information. And further in the game, they may be close enough to work with. Try to secure at least 2 borders with peace agreements. This will let you concentrate your forces.

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When you decide you need to attack, do it in force. You should send several armies into various provinces to take as many as possible to cripple his/her war effort. ALWAYS have small armies of 20 or so cavalry drop out in each province you capture. This will prevent a reserve army cutting off your line of retreat. One thing that is not very realistic is that armies can cross each others path without fighting. It would be better if meeting armies fought on the border with the victorious army continuing on with their attack.

Conclusion

Death & Sorrow is a very good game and is an excellent buy. Turns cost only \$2 and the start-up includes the rules and 3 free turns for \$5. Complexity is kept to a minimum and diplomacy is fairly important.

The moderators of the game, Eckert Gaming Group, are always willing to answer any question you may have. I have never had a mistake in one of my turns so I can't say for sure how they would treat it. I have talked with Jim Eckert though and he assured me that mistakes would be corrected if at all possible. In those cases where it couldn't be corrected compensation in the form of more horses, or more building, would given.

About the reviewer:

I have been playing PBM games for almost 20 years and played war games for a few years before

that. I have a MBA from Temple Univ. in finance and work as a financial analyst and accountant.

I enjoy any type of game except for sports PBM games.



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THIRD FOUNDATION - A REVIEW

By Charles Crooks Jr.

Third Foundation is a game of exploration and conquest in space. So far, sounds like every other space game on the market, right? But there are differences.

BACKGROUND

The game Third Foundation is loosely based on Asimov's Foundation series. Third Foundation is set in a group of artificially created star clusters in a time far in the future. After series of invasion and revolutions, a few strong local governments have emerged. You are the undisputed leader of one of those emerging empires, and your destiny - nay, sacred duty - is to restore order to the chaos. And not incidentally to increase your coffers and power base in the process.

CHARACTER TYPES

There are several types of characters in Third Foundation. There are three "singular" character types: the Emperor, the Pretender, and the Kaiser. Each of these characters has a group of followers (hopefully) - the Emperor's followers are called Royal dukes, the Pretender's are called Marcher Barons, and the Kaiser's are called Jaegers. There are also Cosmologists (mad scientists who seek

to populate the Universe with mutant populations), Luddites (devout environmentalists and pastoralists), Republican (who seek to create Republics), Slavers, Traders (merchants, essentially), Vikings (who get points for owning hordes of loot), Xenophobes (who get points for killing population), the Hive (a race of insects, who take over worlds by dropping eggs onto them), and Zealots (who get points for converting population to their religion or political belief). There are also two moderator - run "player" types, the Gorm (buyers of slaves) and the Republican worlds. Each character type gets points for different actions. One interesting facet of Third Foundation is that the Emperor, Pretender, and Kaiser get points for worlds owned by their followers, a rule which actually encourages cooperation, if you can imagine such a thing.

THE MAP

The map in Third Foundation is highly structured, and is known to players at the start of the game. I have enclosed a map section from the Main cluster, labelled "Figure 1", as an example. In addition to the main cluster, there are 26 smaller

clusters, and several orphan stars which are not attached to any cluster. Each star has one habitable world. Each world may have one or all of the following: population, mineral deposits, treasure deposits, mining production facilities, industry, and a variety of other goodies we'll (or, more accurately, I'll) discuss later. Population comes in 8 different types, and only one population type may exist on a world.

CHARACTERS

One feature of Third Foundation that I've found fascinating (but then, I'm easily fascinated) is that each player has a character, which is an actual game piece that moves around the board and does things. Each character has a charisma index (CI), which begins at 100 and reflects good and bad deeds that the player has done during the game. For example one's CI goes up if another player declares that player an ally, or if that player shoots at the ships of a declared enemy; it goes down if one shoots at a declared ally. Characters can capture worlds or derelict ships, or can increase the industry production of a world. If a player's character is killed, he starts over with another character. However,

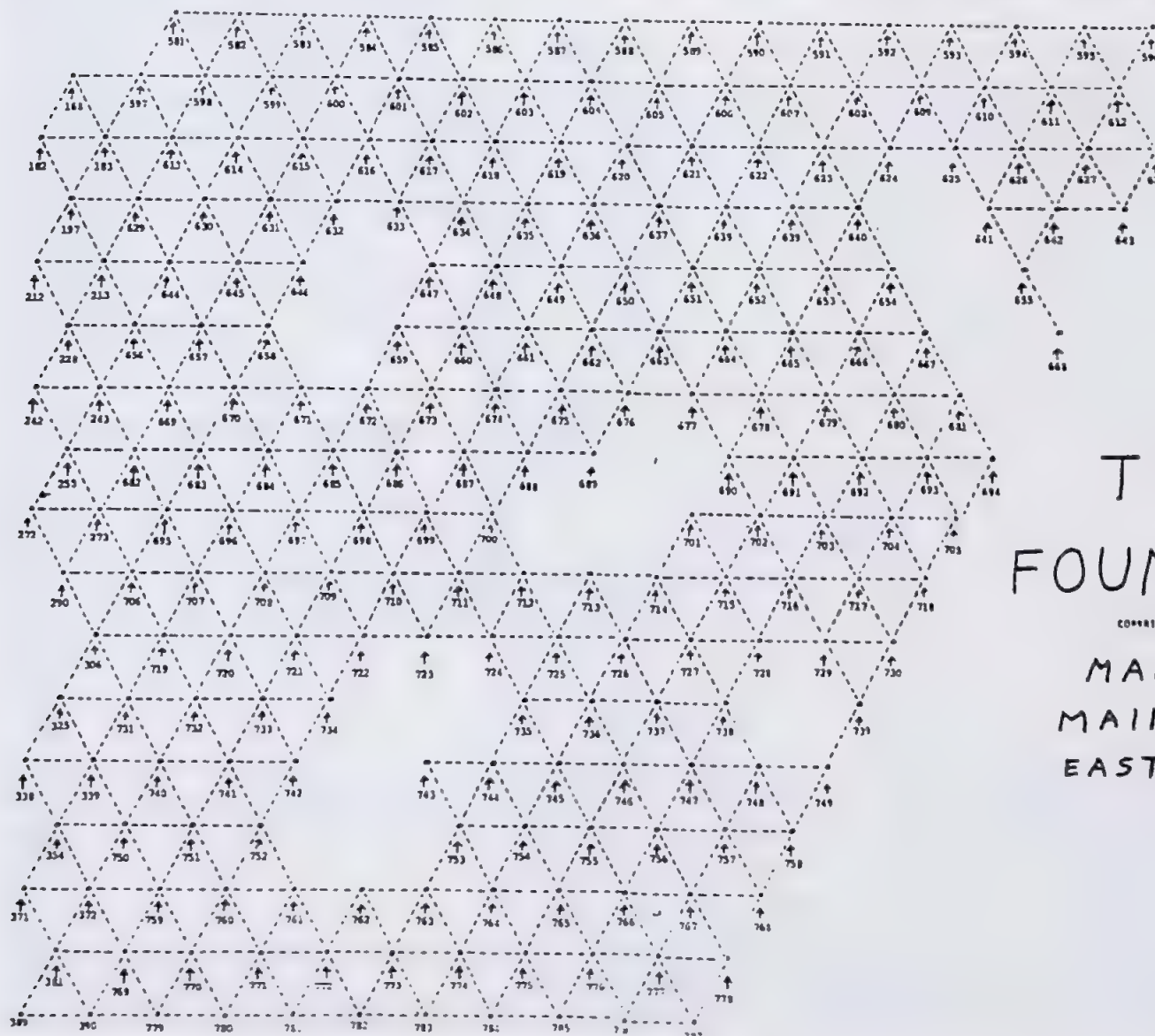


Figure 1

THIRD
FOUNDATION

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MAP SHEET #4
MAIN CLUSTER
EASTERN SECTOR

this character's CI starts at 100.

SHIPS

Players can build one of several types of ships - destroyers, freighters, cruisers, battleships, and space fortresses. A ship is built by ordering a hull, and then building onto that hull on subsequent turns. Ships may have as components lasers, hull units, propulsion units (engines, to the uninitiated), and cargo holds. Each type of ship may have different amounts of each component. A cruiser, for example, may have a maximum of 8 lasers, 8 hulls, 3 cargo units, and 3 propulsion units. A freighter may have a maximum of 2 lasers, 4 hull units, 2 propulsion units, and 18 cargo holds. Each propulsion unit will allow a ship to move through one world per turn. Players may also find derelict ships laying, relics of one of the previous Empires that used to rule the galaxy. These ships have tremendous hull strengths and are therefore very difficult to destroy. They may be captured by characters.

OTHER GAME PIECES

There are a lot of neat things to play with in Third Foundation. There are also some not-so-neat things (unless, of course, they happen to your sworn enemy). There are zappers, special ground-based lazer systems that defend against attacks. There are fighting robots, which can be dumped onto a world to conquer it. There are slave robots, used by slavers to enslave population (as you may have expected). There are worker robots, used on worlds short of population. There are HTL points, through which ships may move to the smaller clusters, or to other HTL points in the main cluster. There are also novas, magnetic storms, and red giants, all of which have deleterious effects on one's shipping and production facilities, and outlook on life in general.

ARTIFACT VAULTS

One feature of Third Foundation that I particularly like is the artifact vault. It seems that the Empire left various items of high technology laying around the Universe, sealed in artifact vaults. Ar-

tifact vaults may be opened by a player, simply by writing an order to that effect. The vault may yield special treasure (good only for points), an item of special technology, or it may blow the ship to the far reaches of the Universe. The special technology items are make the game interesting, and give it variety. Because these items are constantly being reinvented by the moderator, no two games of Third Foundation are the same, and the game is continually fresh and exciting.

PLAYING THE GAME

Each player in Third Foundation begins the game with a cluster of home worlds, with several ships at each world. Since the map is known at the beginning of the game, exploration occurs quickly, and players meet each other quickly. Thence the inevitable choice - do I shoot him, ignore him, or (if all else fails) actually attempt to communicate with him? The latter is accomplished by the means of that old standby, a 3x5 card. Orders are written in code - no, dummy, nor Morse code, but special coded messages. For example, if Destroyer DG250 wanted to move to worlds 381, 382, and 383, its owner would write "DG250-W381-W382-W383". Simple, right? Well, not really. There are an entire pageful of orders that can be written (more, if you count some of my blunders), and it's easy to make mistakes. Of course, the number of orders reflect the wide array of options open to the player, one feature of this game.

It's very difficult to kill a ship in this game. Each shot fired at a ship takes out one of its accoutrements (ie a lasar, a hull unit, a propulsion unit, etc). When a ship's hull strength goes to 0, it is destroyed. Meanwhile, fire also destroys lasers, cargo holds, etc. Also, damage to a ship can be repaired. All of this means that destroying an opponent's ship is very difficult. The good news, of course, is that destroying your ship is equally as difficult.

Victory in a Third Foundation game occurs when a player reaches a score determined at ran-

dom by the moderator, but between 15,000 and 20,000 points. The game then goes into an extended phase. The winner of the extended phase is the alliance which controls over 80% of the worlds in the main cluster. Players may elect not to participate in the extended mode.

HISTORY OF THE GAME

Third Foundation was originally designed by Richard Thurston, who ran the game by hand, a valiant but eventually futile undertaking. Richard licensed the game to David Jameson, 7504 Wilshire, Boise, ID 83704. Dave programmed the game on a computer. He's been an excellent moderator, open to suggestion from the players, and quick to get out turns.

In summation, I've really enjoyed Third Foundation, and I intend to sign up for another game, just as soon as I can spare the time from watching my Jello harden.



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You'll first enter Kolob in a medieval era. Currently, the Barriers keep you contained within a certain time frame, although other times await your exploration.

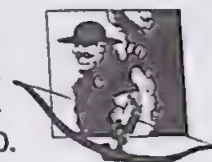
You'll choose one of several sects to work with, which will help set your general method of operation. Join the Black Guard and follow their motto of, "The world is mine, and I'll have it now!" The FREGA sect claims the neutral ground in their attempts to amass as much information as possible. Perhaps the Kolobian Liberation



Organization's constant attacks to stop change are more to your liking? You can join the White Guard, and be on the side of the major portion of the populace. Or take on the deity Shandra and join the Yenro as they attempt to convert the masses.

As each new time opens, there are new discoveries to make, new lands to chart, and new people to meet. The world awaits change, and you are the catalyst.

OUT TIME DAYS is a highly interactive role-playing Play-By-Mail game with turns processed weekly. It has received excellent reviews, notably from Flagship and Paper Mayhem. Turn cost is \$5.00. The game is open ended and 99% computer moderated. The rulebook may be obtained for \$5.00 (refundable with start-up). A special startup is available that gives you the rulebook, the startup turn, and five turns for only \$15.00.

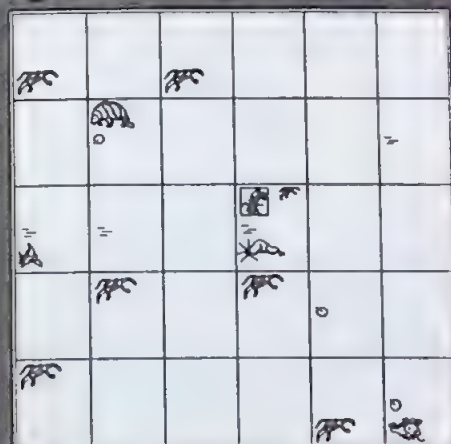


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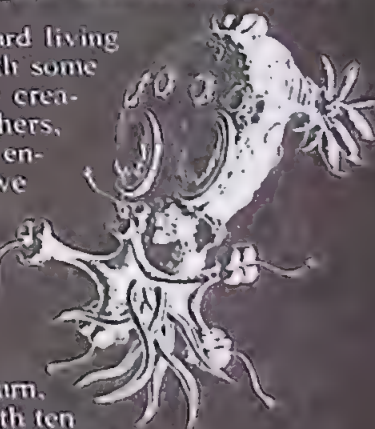
in a rather unique environment.



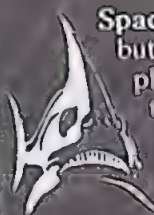
"Space Combat is FUN! Easy to play, yet enough depth to keep any sci-fi PBM fan engrossed. The tactical laser-printed maps for the 2-D version really brings the game to life. TRY IT!" Tim Sullivan, FLAGSHIP US editor

"Well-designed, with a superbly written rulebook and laser-printed turnsheets, Space Combat is an easy-to-learn but challenging game. Its innovative design rewards tactical brilliance while giving neophytes plenty of opportunities to sharpen their skills." J.W. Akers-Sassaman

You'll be fighting in an edgeless contest zone aboard living creatures. **Space Combat** is almost all combat, with some room for diplomacy. Offensive actions include the creature's Psychic Screams to mentally disrupt others, launching Inverse Mines that will implode near your enemy, freeing Spores to destroy internals, using Nerve Pulses to paralyze pesky scouts, and Virally Infecting your opponent in the hopes of taking over their alien. Each turn comes with a special graphic printout of your ending position to aid you in planning.



Space Combat was designed to be easy to learn, but difficult to master. Every game starts with ten players, and as each is eliminated, the chances of the game ending will increase. Turnsheets are custom made on a laser printer to aid you in filling out your next turn. The games run about 12-16 turns. Cost is \$3.50 per turn. A rulebook (required before you can join) is only \$1.00.



For more information on Space Combat, our highly acclaimed Out Time Days (an RPG of time travel in an alternate dimension), Kolob: the First Generation (creation & evolution on an unknown world), Battles over Kolobrzeg (WWII plane vs plane combat), write us today. The latter two games are in playtest and currently discounted.

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EVERMOOR: DISCOVERIES IN A MEDIEVAL FANTASY

by Richard L. Smith

I am sure we all have wondered why some PBM games are continually successful and develop a large number of loyal players. Maybe if we knew all the answers, we would be marketing our own games instead of playing. But, I enjoy the 'play' too much, so will try and answer the 'BIG QUESTION' from a players standpoint. I will use a game I have recently become involved with and believe will develop a strong player following. I refer to the Medieval Fantasy wargame, EverMoor!

I first read of EverMoor in Paper Mayhem. The name alone invokes visions of secluded, magical woods and mystical dragons. The article was brief but informative and reminded me of other games I have played (Alamaze, Earthwood, Epic and Dark Blades). I have played (Alamaze, Earthwood, Epic and Dark Blades). I have enjoyed various aspects of all those games but was never satisfied with the complete product. I was always looking for a Medieval wargame with 'heart' and ease of play. I think I've found it!

John Brush, the game designer, has come up with a concise, fresh fantasy wargame, with many features inherent in this type (Group movement, group leaders, magical beasts, distinct kingdoms, magical artifacts and unique troop types). Since the notice in PM, the company has delivered! This was no mean feat since the notice was somewhat pre-mature. And unlike some companies who leave players in the dark regarding game progress, Games Adventure notified me of approximate game start dates—they kept me informed by more than one letter of their progress. And unlike one company I quit, they have offered answers to questions on game mechanics and have even offered hints on future discoveries all players will have access to. This caring attitude gives players a feeling of being part of a PBM family!

EverMoor is an open-ended game, with victory conditions. To win, a player has to convert all enemies to allies or destroy all his enemies. Since players secretly declare allies and enemies, this might take some time. I think this will create a need for diplomacy, even from the start. Players take on the persona of various fantasy types: Barbarian, Sage, Arch Mage, Sorcerer, etc. Each type begins in a city and starts with several leaders. The leader types, which include knights, scholars, bard, ranger, thief, healer and inventor, all assist the king, in running the kingdom. Each leader type means the possibility of future discoveries in their 'chosen' fields. I have already learned how to build a 'Watch Tower' and a Wizard Tower (for magic research). I have learned how to build a siege device known as a Pavise, a wicker shield for two men. This is an aspect I wish all games had: The potential to make new discoveries every turn. This gives the 'king' a chance to build his forces/kingdom in a unique fashion. To me, this is part of a games 'heart'.

gives the 'king' a chance to build his forces/kingdom in a unique fashion. To me, this is part of a games 'heart'.

This brings me to the major aspect of EM, which can only be an asset to an already, brilliantly designed game. I am referring to the turn-results sheet. I dislike turn results which force a player to jump from page one to page five, in order to find out where his army is or how many supplies it carries. The EM turn results are efficiently organized, logical and concise in the information it imparts to the player kings.

The first entry on the turn results show who (by player number) you have declared ally, enemy or undecided. However, not all information can be kept from other kings. The Global Activity report is next, with World Market quotes on supplies (Food, Horses, Boats, Wagons, Iron). Anyone can buy supplies from the World Market. The next entry shows what cities you control. It shows if any groups are there and the status of your city leader (king). The city report shows the number of each type of supplies, the available resources and production levels (which can be raised by spending silver) and the troop levels, including numbers, races (Dwarf, Elf, Gnome, Human) and types of troops (Crossbow, Archers, Horsemen, Pikemen, Scouts). Then, each group (you may have up to three) is listed, with its' supplies, leader, magical beasts, troops and any areas they moved through. (You may find magical artifacts, beasts and may give orders to groups to stop if they are encountered). After your three group reports, any unattached leaders are listed, along with supplies, magic armor/weapons they might be carrying. This brings me to another aspect of EM, carrying capacity.

I don't like to have to go to my calculator to try and add up the weight of items when I attempt to move through terrain in a game. In EM, a group or leader receives an 'encumbrance percentage.' The percentage is printed on your turn and you know at a glance if your group is 'overloaded'! You do not have to calculate carrying capacity - you may even overload a group but your group will continue to move, just as in real life. Of course, your movement rate is slowed some. I enjoy this concept of movement and now may concentrate on direction, terrain and strategy, rather than numbers!

Another valuable aspect of the turn results sheet is that it is done in a multi-color format. Headings are in black type; Supply status, troop strengths, Group and leader status and movement, is done in blue type; and Discoveries and encounters are done in red type. The turn results are clearly one of the best organized I have seen in eleven years of gaming.

The rulebook is very clear and free of ambiguous rules. In fact, it really is a 'Player Guide'. I remarked to John Brush that sixteen orders seemed enough

for the scale of the game. He commented, 'What makes you think you won't discover new orders as you play?' I just love games of discovery, don't you!?

For information on EverMoor, send \$5 - for rules, to: Games Adventure, 2200 Road L., Redwood Valley, CA-95470-9764.



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The best game of American railroad robber barons ever. Fierce competition as 15 players race to build the best railroads and make the most money in each game.

Rules \$3.00 - Game Entry \$12.00 - \$4.00/turn

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The enhanced original game of medieval power politics in the age of King Arthur. Fifteen barons compete to become King of England using economics, military might, and diplomacy.

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The fast and fun game of exploration and conquest set in a vast fantasy world. Up to 200 players per game, no due dates, 29 types of terrain, 84 types of creatures, magic spells, special attributes, much more.

Rules \$1.50 - Game Entry \$10.00
Variable Turn Fees

All games are completely computer moderated. You do not need a computer to play, just a pencil and a keen mind.

Call or write us for a free brochure with more detailed information on these games.

GRAAF SIMULATIONS

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Phone: (313) 772-9595 Fax: (313) 772-9659

GAMELINE

ADVENTURE SIMULATION GAMES

Dark Blades

We just started our 5th game. The games are filling up fast so send for your start-up today.

One of the major features of the game is it's complexity, but the computer does all the hard work. Filling in the turn sheets are easy, it does not take hours to do it, all you have to do is play!

The start-up package costs only \$10 and you get a full color collector's box, rule book, color map, and two free turns. Turn prices are \$3.50 and they are fixed with no "hidden" extras.

MegaPrix

MegaPrix is a Formula One motor racing game. You will battle it out; on the race track and behind the pit wall, against 15 other teams to win either the driver or team championships. Every team has 2 cars to compete in for each race.

Your turn report is 6 pages long. You will also get 2 free newsletters each season. The start-up for MegaPrix is \$5, this includes the rule book. Each race (turn) is \$2.50, with No extra costs. If you pay for the whole season (16 races) at once, it will only cost you \$37.50, that's a 7% discount off the single turn price.

New Games

We will be coming out with a some new games in the next few months. If you want to help playtest them or just get on our mailing list write or call us.

Adventure Simulations Games
22659 Keswick St. Dept 943
Canoga Park, CA 91304
(818) 702-0670

ARK ROYAL GAMES

The SAGA program has now been translated for the Atari ST! You can download it from CompuServe and GENie, or order it directly from us for \$3.00. It uses the 4-color medium-resolution graphics mode and several different text styles to display virtually all the forces under your command. It can display your turn report, and you can enter all of your moves into it so we can read them directly into our computer. As of this dates, SAGA is available for anyone with an IBM, MacIntosh or Atari-ST computer. And you can play using any other computer, if you get onto an EMail service such as CompuServe or GENie.

This summer we well start a 3-week game composed mostly of players from military bases around the world, with some international players thrown in as well. Anyone interested in a 3-week game, get your setup request in soon!

Ark Royal Games
Box 6378
Aloha, OR 97007
(503) 643-3292
CompuServe 71750,1153

attracting players from all over the globe.

Now Bard Interactive Games brings this game to PBM players everywhere. StarQuest is fast paced, heavily diplomatic and tactically open ended, allowing the individual to design and execute their own strategy.

StarQuest has eight separate character classes each with a specialty in either Economic, Offensive and Defensive strength. With Stragates, Customized Ships, Sector Mines and Alien Devices all in an easy-to-read format that makes for an exciting turnsheet.

StarQuest has many game variants, Team, Multi-Character and for the strategically minded, US vs. THEM variant where diplomacy is impossible because all other players show up on your turnsheet as THEM.

Bard Interactive Games (B.I.G.) plans to start it's first Game in July. Rules are \$6 and turns are \$5. We ask that you do not sign up for a game before receiving the rules.

B.I.G. hopes to be recognized as a PBM Company that provides players with total PBM services. Crisp laser printouts, Phone Fax, Electronic mail and an Electronic Bulletin Board services will be offered.

Bard Interactive Games
P.O. Box 7107
Nashua, NH 03060

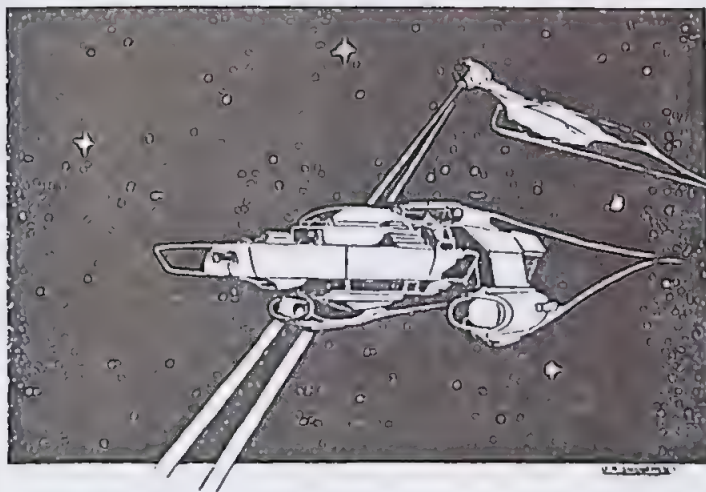
BARD INTERACTIVE GAMES

Bard Interactive Games is getting ready to offer StarQuest, a game of Galactic Conquest. StarQuest has been in field test for over two years with 160 players playing 22 games. It has been refined and tuned to what we consider the most flexible tactical game offered.

StarQuest was written by a Lisp developer in the artificial intelligence group of a major computer company. This completely computer moderated game quickly became a big hit within the company,

BLUE PANTHER ENTERPRISES

FREE INTRODUCTORY RULES for all our games are now available - Drop us a line and we'll send you them FREE. Each set includes a capsule summary of the flow of events for each game, player actions, victory conditions, etc. and info on how to get started.



TAKAMO II

WHAT IS TAKAMO II?

It's a game of exploration and high adventure.

It's exciting. It's fast paced.

It's galactic civilizations clashing for survival.

It's a computer moderated, strategic level simulation of empires in a struggle for survival among the stars.

It's pitting your skills against others to become conqueror of the galaxy.

It's the combined abilities of ICBs, miners, farmers, pirates and smugglers.

It's a closed-ended version of TAKAMO in which winners receive free game credit.

TAKAMO II... it's more than a game.

Setup fee is \$10.00 and includes two ten-action turns and the rulebook. Turn cost is \$2.50. Extra actions are 25 cents each. Rulebook,

when purchased separately, is \$5.00

For more information, write to:

ADVENT GAMES • P.O. Box 81674 • Lincoln, NE 68501

BPE is pleased to introduce The Boys of Summer, a new sports PBM for 26 players. You assume the role of general manager of a big league baseball team, getting to build, trade, sign and release as you see fit. The game is ready for playtest. Rules are \$1, turns \$1. Special offer - \$10 for rules and an entire game [12-18 turns.] Three playtest games are forming now.

The playtest games of EMPIRES FOR RENT are winding down. The game will be commercially available in July. EFR is a 12 player strategic SF game of diplomacy, economics and empire building. Rules are \$4, a complete startup is \$10 [includes 3 turns]. The first two dozen players receive an extra turn FREE.

Did you know that BPE also offers used games for sale? PBM customers get 20% off any purchase from the list. Ask for your free copy.

Have you ever noticed that PBM games seem to be getting more "serious"? Well, one of the GMs here came up with a nifty little card game. It's called Kill Ted!, and we guarantee it's violent and senseless. There's a free introductory rules sheet available for this game too - just drop a line to the address below.

Free introductory rules give you a chance to find out more before you spend your hard-earned PBM dollar. Give them a look. They cost nothing and you might find something you like BEFORE you spend ten or twenty bucks.

See you at Atlanticon in Baltimore July 11-13th - look for the guys in the Kill Ted! tee-shirts.

Blue Panther Enterprises
PO Box 080003
Staten Island, NY 10308-0009

COSMOS CREATIONS CO.

Cosmos Creations Co. is proud to announce that the first game of Starmagic is under way. However new players can still join for the first 10 turns with an average Empire. If you are interested in the first game please contact Cosmos Creations and we will

send you more information. Cosmos Creations and we will send you more information. Cosmos Creations is now also taking new players for the second game of Starmagic.

If you are looking for a flexible and well seasoned game Starmagic is for you. If you would like more information or a sample turn just write and ask for more free information.

Cosmos Creations Co. is dedicated to giving it's players complete satisfaction and help with any questions players may have.

Cosmos Creations Co.
PO Box 2101
Iowa City, IA 52244

CREATIVE KEYS

Greetings! This is my first submission to this column, and I have quite a bit to share. My initial game, *BattleLords*, is going very well. For those of you who haven't heard of *BattleLords*, please see our ad in this issue of Paper Mayhem.

The playtest game was won by Randy Tullos, and Games 001 and 002 are getting more exciting with every turn. Some of the strategies being used in Game 001 are the most innovative tactics I have ever seen.

A licencing agreement with a moderator in the United Kingdom has just been awarded, making the game available to our PBM friends in that region. Negotiations are underway for a German version of *BattleLords*, and a Australian licensee is being sought.

Some of the projects I am currently working on include an expanded version of *BattleLords* (no changes other than allowing around fifty players per game) as well as a fantasy league basketball game. I hope to offer the basketball game in time for the 1990-1991 season.

Lastly, I would like to notify everyone of our current address. Some of the company mailing lists going around still have our old address (My full-time job elected to relocate me to the home office).

If you would like any additional information regarding the items mentioned above, feel free to contact me at the address or phone number listed below. Good Gaming!

Creative Keys
P.O. Box 7264
Fredericksburg, VA 22404
(703) 898-4347

CREATIVE LOGIC SIMULATIONS

Struggle for the Galactic Core

On the edge of the solar disk, a score of dark silhouettes of the monstrous galactic Dreadnought reflect no light. They sit poised, waiting for the will of the Admiral. Then as the command is given, calm becomes chaos, peace becomes violence. A thousand Fighters pour out from the gaping bays of the Dreadnoughts and engage each other in a furious dance of death. A thousand thousand rays of light stream from the countless guns of the ships, and the darkness of the void is set to light. Space is shaken with the force of death unleashed, and mighty fires burn with such fury that the sun becomes dim by comparison. Chaos reigns and the vast swarm of the melee pushes the battle computers to their limits. No quarter is asked, no quarter is given. In the end there can be only one victor.

Struggle for the Galactic Core is a fast paced game of strategy and combat. Players direct their Admirals to expand their empire and their Planetary Supervisors to defend and govern it. The Admirals direct combat from their Dreadnoughts, huge battleships designed to transport hundreds or even thousands of lightning fast one man Attack Fighters. Titanic battles just like those in your favorite space movies commonly occur. Only players who successfully balance the design and construction of Dreadnoughts and Gravity Well Jump Gates, technology research, espionage, diplomacy and govern their planets effectively can hope to survive in the Struggle for the Galactic

STARMAGIC

Starmagic is a game of deep space combat, colonization, and technology. It includes all star systems within 30 light years of our star system. There are no set ways to play or a time limit to win, a very flexible game. Starmagic has been running for over 4 years in Australia. Please write for more free information.

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☐ more information

☐ rule book \$4

☐ sign up \$10
(includes set-up turn, map & \$6 credit
turns processed bi-weekly
turns cost \$6-\$10)



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FIVE MIGHTY SPELLCASTERS
ONE GREAT BATTLE
FOR GLORY
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THE ARCAINE ORB

- FIVE POSITIONS TO CHOOSE FROM: WIZARD, ARCHMAGE, DRUID, SORCERER, AND NECROMANCER
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- SUPERIOR LASER PRINTED GRAPHIC OUTPUT
- \$6.00 PER TURN- NO HIDDEN CHARGES, DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE
- SEND ORDERS TO US BY MAIL OR AVOID THE POSTAL SERVICE AND INSURE SPEEDY AND ERROR FREE TURN ENTRY BY SENDING YOUR INFORMATION VIA MODEM OR TOUCH TONE PHONE !

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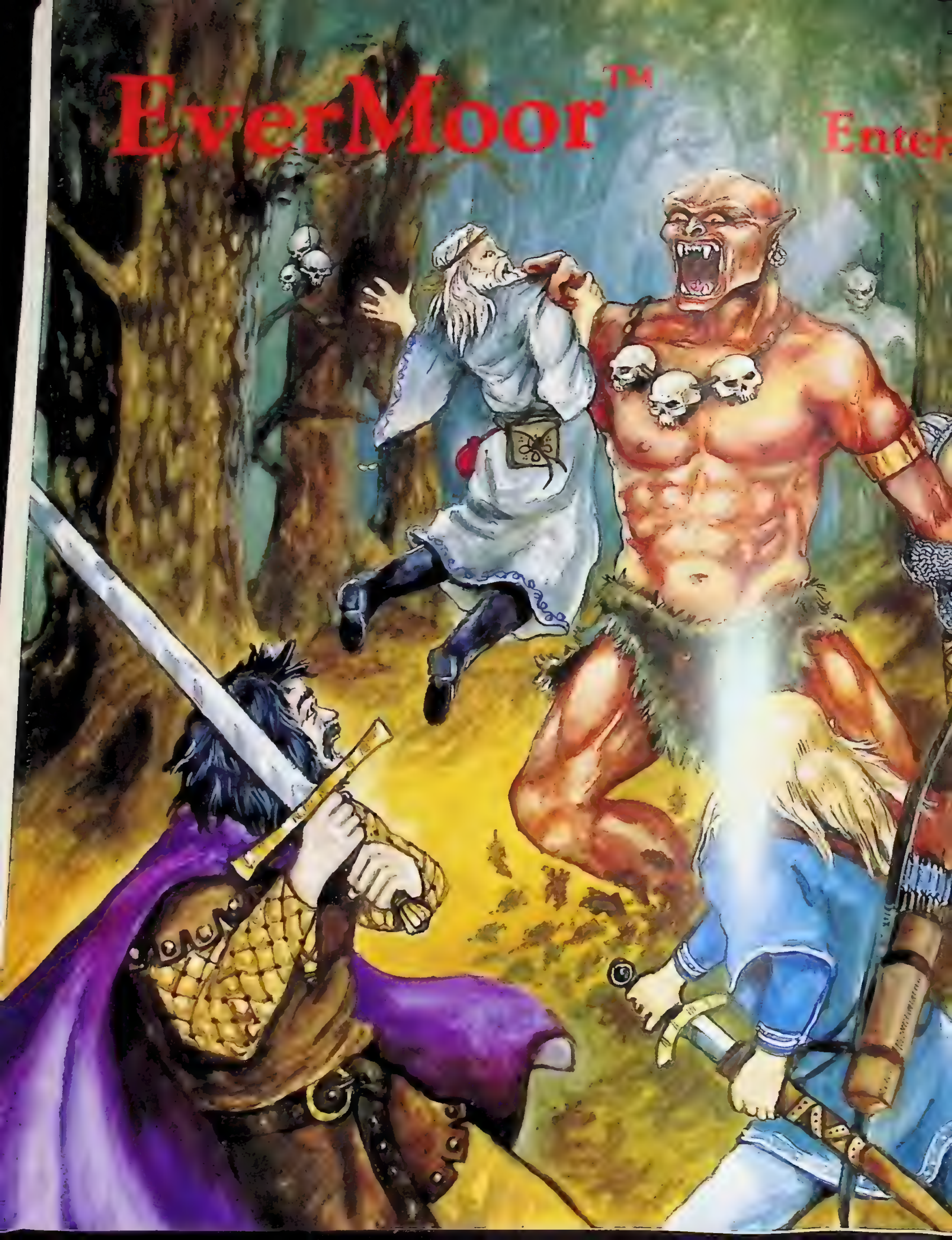
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this realm of barbarians,
beasts and magic...



**Games
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Join EverMoor™! A strategic play-by-mail game of conquest set in a fantasy world. Explore this dangerous unknown world, while building your empire to control this realm of barbarians, beasts and magic.

Learn to construct artillery engines, siege equipment, and perform magic research. Command large forces of Humans, Elves, Dwarves and Gnomes, the four civilized races of the not-so civilized world of EverMoor™. Recruit Goblins, Centaurs and other beasts to lay siege to an enemy fortress or send Dragons and Pegasus to spy on your enemy's position.

Write: Games Adventure, 2200 Road L, Redwood Valley, CA 95470-9764. New player set-up is \$15.00 and includes; map, player's guide and 3 turns. Additional turns are \$4.25. Turn-around time is two weeks. Current player set-up is \$10.00. Current player be sure to include your account number. Player's Guide alone is \$5.00.

CAMPAIGN BOOKS

A complete fantasy world campaign for all role-playing systems

The powerful forces of the Tarin Tor and the outnumbered armies of the Ælven Republic have been at war for centuries. Through arcane Magicks, Hellish Allies and sheer numbers, the Tarin Tor have been taking both Human and Ælven lands in their southward march of conquest.

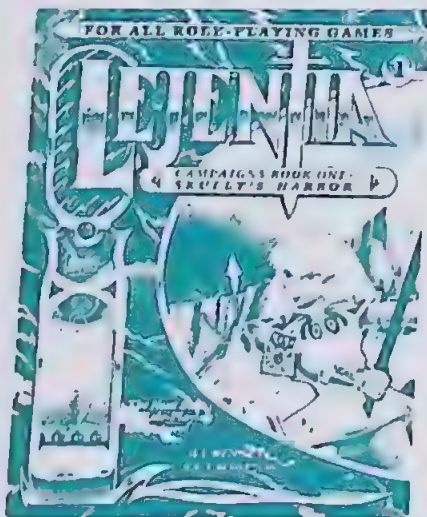
Your campaign begins in Skully's Harbor, a wild river town that is on the border between The Tarin Tor Lands and the Ælven Republic. An uneasy truce exists between the two Armies on both sides of the River but at any time, the forces of the Tarin Tor may descend upon Skully's Harbor and sweep it away.

Will your players work for the Tarin Tor, the Ælves or any of the many characters who live and work in Skully's Harbor? Will they discover the secret power that keeps the town safe? The answers lie within these pages.

Lejentia Campaigns Book One: Skully's Harbor is the first in a series of Catalyst gamebooks based on the Lejentia Graphic Novel series. Usable with all role-playing systems, the book contains a fully described and mapped town, world map and cultures description, over 50 non-player characters, & 75 different scenerios — everything you need to start your own Lejentia Campaign!

LEJENTIA CAMPAIGNS BOOK 1

Product # 8551 Price: \$14.95 160 Pages



★ NEW! AT ORIGINS ~ FLYING BUFFALO BOOTH

Free Copy of Lejentia Stanza 2 to anyone buying Fort Bevits at Origins!!



LEJENTIA CAMPAIGNS
BOOK 2: FORT BEVITS

Product # 8553

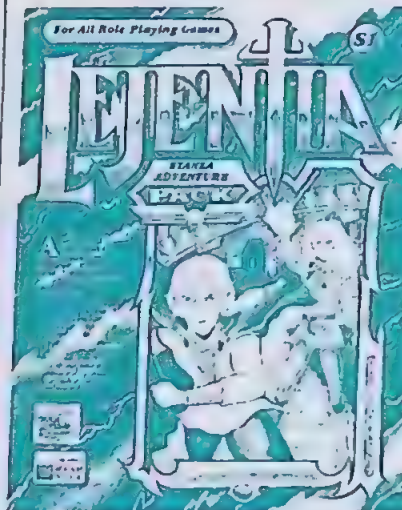
Price: \$14.95 160 Pages

Filled with villains, vipers and alien creatures, Fort Bevits will be a true test for any group of stout hearted adventures. Lavishly illustrated throughout, this book is terrific to read whether you role-play or not.

Lejentia Campaigns Book Two is usable with all role-playing systems. It includes:

- A fully-described fortress & caverns
- Complete details on the ways & races of the Tarin Tor Army
- Dargonathian Spell lists
- Cultural description of the insectoid Novilles
- Geographical features & area maps
- Over 50 illustrated non-player characters
- 70+ detailed scenarios for game masters
- 20 Fortress Maps & dozens of illustrations

LEJENTIA STANZA ADVENTURE PACK



Product #8552

Price: \$9.95

A gamemaster's guide to the Lejentia graphic novel series, the stanza pack is designed to draw gamers into the midst of the Lejentia saga.

- 11 X 17 map of the Ælven City
- Full-color world map of Lejentia
- The first stanza in the Lejentia graphic series.
- A 24 page book detailing people, places, & scenarios from Stanza 1.

All-System

Catalyst
Series

Core.

SGC is 100% computer moderated and runs on a two week turn around time. Monthly games are also available but require a longer waiting period before they are started. Setup, rulebook and three free turns are available at the special price of \$7.50 until July 31st. Regular turns are only \$4. Additional rulebooks are available for \$2.50.

Creative Logic Simulations
33 Silverton Ave.
Toronto, Ontario
M3H 3E7
Canada

EARNSHAW ENTERPRISES

If it's not one thing, it's another! After making the most recent set of changes to **Outer Reaches**, developments in the game triggered a bug in the compiler we were using. The tech support staff of the company that published the compiler had no idea why the error occurred, so we had to upgrade to a different version of the language. Unfortunately, it also had a bug in it, so we had to wait for a new version to be sent to us. Finally, after much tribulation and several hours of work, we got the programs working properly, resumed game #1 and started game #2.

Our new game, **Manifest Destiny**, is going well; we have been writing the actual code for a couple

of months now, and there have not yet been any major obstacles. As of this writing, we are still hoping for an early summer playtest; by the time you read this article, we hope to be ready to start. See this space in the next issue for a complete status report! We are still opening new games of **Conquest** and **Outer Reaches** while we gear up for this new addition to our product lines.

To play **Conquest**, there is a \$4.00 one-time set up fee (add \$2.00 for the rules). This fee gets you the set up and first turn in as many games of **Conquest** as you wish to enter, simultaneous or consecutive. Turns are \$3.00 each.

An **Outer Reaches** set up package is available for \$10.00 that includes the rules, game set up, and the first two turns. Turns 1-10 are \$4.00 each, turns 11-20 are \$4.50 each, and turns 21-on are \$5.00 each. The rules alone are \$5.00, and game set up and first two turns (without the rules) are \$7.50. We are now taking sign ups for both Slow (21 day deadlines) and Fast (14 day deadlines) games.

EARNSHAW ENTERPRISES
773 East 820 North #7
Provo, Utah 84606
(801) 375-9727

ECKERT GAMING GROUP

DEATH & SORROW game ten has begun, game eleven is now filling up. We are now offering a three week turnaround "slow" version of D&S for Canadian and Military players (and others who just want longer time for planning/diplomacy). **DEATH & SORROW** start-up's are \$5.00, which include the rules, set-up and your first three turns. Turns are only \$2.00 through turn nine, \$2.50 for ten through nineteen, and \$3.00 for turns twenty and beyond. We expect games to run about 25 turns, taking approximately one year to complete. See the PBM Activity Corner for some details on current games.

Our playtests are still in progress, contact us for details on becoming a playtester and to be added to our playtester notification list.

ECKERT GAMING GROUP
P.O. Box 16384
Rochester, NY 14616

EMPRISE GAME SYSTEMS

Emprise Game Systems is proud to introduce our newest Play-By-Mail product: **BLOOD PIT**, a game of gladiatorial combat. **BLOOD PIT** has just gone through an intensive playtest and testing phase where over 25,000 fights were adjudicated. Many alterations and improvements were made and we thank our 120+ playtesters for their com-



GALACTIC PRISONERS

2440 AD - When expanding into the unknown regions of space, humans encountered a vastly superior civilization, the Nibor. Because of the highly aggressive nature of humans, peace with the Nibor was not possible. The Nibor were forced to destroy all humans except for a very few. These remaining humans have been placed on a portion of a large planet. You are one of those select, remaining humans. You will be studied by your Nibor observers.

Because of your unique personality, intelligence and leadership, the Nibor have selected you as the captain of an All Terrain Vehicle (ATV). You have been given a crew of 100 humans who were your fellow prisoners. It is your responsibility, as the captain, to provide your crew with survival.

Galactic Prisoners is a unique, realistic and exciting, computer-moderated, open-ended, futuristic game. There are numerous avenues of play. Some of you will build walled forts to defend yourselves. Some will build a vast labyrinth of tunnels below the planetary surface. Some will establish colonies to increase production and income. Some will form corporations in the player-controlled stock market. Some will become warriors and take what they want from others by force. Some will do combinations of all of these. Alliances will be formed. Treaties will be made and broken. There will be much to explore and discover. Many different aliens will share this prison with you. Those of you who survive and prosper will do so because of your intelligence and understanding. Luck plays only a small part.

At first glance, **Galactic Prisoners** appears to be an uncomplicated game. It isn't. It is a game of discovery. As you learn, you will see that **Galactic Prisoners** is a large, complex game. As you learn, you will progress to more and more complex versions of the game. All turns are processed on the day they are received as long as seven days have elapsed.

To begin, send your check for \$17.00 to Grandel, Inc. to receive the rulebook, setup and 5 turns. Subsequent turns will be \$2.50 each. Discounts can lower the cost to \$2.20 per turn. Combat results are sent to attacked players free of charge. We accept phoned-in turns at no additional charge. Except for two rarely used techniques, there are no additional charges.

Any player who recruits a new player will be given two free turns.

Grandel, Inc., P.O. Box 4386, Wilmington, DE 19807-0386

ments and criticisms.

BLOOD PIT has grown explosively in these last few months. Two hundred teams have sprouted up and by the end of this summer we expect to have doubled or tripled that amount. This has not been unnoticed by overseas moderators.

Emprise Game Systems has licensed its game BLOOD PIT in Germany and in the United Kingdom and is working on an Australian licensee at this time. The German game will be a converted version run by the original German professional PBM company, Peter Stevens. Both licensees are expected to run short proving playtests for their equipment during this summer and fall and have commercial games running shortly thereafter.

Emprise Game Systems is also returning WORLD CAMPAIGNS to playtest. The game system itself is just fine -- the mechanics work marvelously. However, converting the game over to our usual 100% computerized format spurred several players into commenting that the old games were changed enough as to alter their play balance. Those games were started under the hand of Tim Jones, from whom we licensed the game. We are planning two or three playtest games, the first of which should be underway by the time this hits the streets. If you are interested in participating, the rules are \$5.00. Turns will be \$2.50 for the duration.

WARP FORCE EMPIRES has gone over to laser printed turns. That, coupled with the our improved accounting system, has added a great deal

of luster to an already highly-polished game.

ENTERTAINMENT PLUS

Adventurer's Guild

The first guild hall of our game Adventurer's Guild is approaching maximum capacity. To allow for more adventurers, other guild halls are presently under construction throughout the land. See our section in the PBM Activity Corner to get a glimpse into the happenings within the Antar guild.

Adventurer's Guild could be described as a gladiator-style game, with each player controlling one or more adventurers training within the guild. Each adventurer can be one of many races, with all aspects of the adventurer being decided by you (i.e., no pre-rolled statistics to contend with). Every turn you'll face seven others in a round robin tournament, along with an optional challenge fight. That's seven or eight fights for a cost of \$9.50 (less any discounts you earn for good performance). With the experience you gain from your fights you'll be able to increase your characteristics and/or your skill with any of the many weapons available within the guild.

That is only the beginning of Adventurer's Guild though. You'll gain gold when you win fights. You'll be able to bet on challenge fights. With your gold you'll be able to purchase equipment for later adventuring. You will be able to learn non-combat skills at the guild as well. Picking locks, moving quietly, bandaging wounds, casting spells...there's a lot more to adventuring than combat! And

Adventurer's Guild is the game which allows you to develop your adventurer as you want before venturing out into the exciting world outside the guild hall.

Sound interesting? Write for a free, no obligation rulebook and setup form today.

Entertainment Plus - Adventurer's Guild

P.O. Box 1981

Appleton, WI 54913

GAMES ADVENTURE

EVERMOOR

On May 1st, 1990 Games Adventure officially released a play-by-mail game called **EverMoor**. **EverMoor** is a strategic game of conquest set in a fantasy world.

With the advent of less costly computing power, the play-by-mail hobby now has the opportunity to become a full fledged industry.

In the past computer moderated play-by-mail games have compromised their design because of an inability to translate complex game mechanics into a computer program.

The **EverMoor** game software was written for the game design, not the limits of the computer hardware or software. Correctly written software takes advantage of the computer systems strengths and overcomes hardware and software limits by applying proper programming strategies.

Unbelievably some computer-moderated PBM games are run using spreadsheet programs, or non-integrated mini-programs to run different functions. Few PBM games are professionally developed software applications.

EverMoor is a new breed of PBM games in which scenario evolves during game play. Players learn as play progresses and the electronic game table is shaped by player actions. This design concept provides easy entry and ample complexity to a broad range of game players.

For further information contact:

John Brush

Games Adventure

2200 Road L

Redwood Valley, CA 95470-9764

(707) 485-5042

GAME SYSTEMS INC.

Anniversaries! Anniversaries! Anniversaries!

It's that time again! Game Systems is happy to announce its Ninth year of postal gaming operation; a near-decade of quality, fantasy, and fun! April 1st (yes, April Fool's Day!) marked the momentous event. We would like to take a minute to thank all of you who have played with us over the years for making it all possible. You are the reason for our being what we are today, so our hats off to ya! Thanks for supporting G.S.I. (If you're NOT playing with G.S.I., it's not too late to find out what you're missing!)

April 1st also marked the Sixth anniversary for Game Systems highly acclaimed monthly journal "Whispers of the Wood". Editor Dennis Edelen

CONQUEST

Medieval Warfare In Your Mail!

As Lord of a feudal province, you are engaged in a struggle for control of the Realm, contending with nine other Lords. You command troops, spies, emissaries, and counter spies in your quest for supreme rulership!

Conquest is 100% computer moderated and easy to learn and play. It is an excellent game for beginners and for advanced gamers looking for a change of pace.

Conquest is an InstantReply game. We will mail the results of your turns the day after we receive them or your next turn is FREE! We don't just talk about fast service; we guarantee it!

Rules and One-Time Set Up: \$6.00

One-Time Set Up: \$4.00

Rules: \$2.00 Turns: \$3.00

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773 East 820 North #7
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Twelve players, each one of five races, vie for dominance in this closed ended game of imperial expansion and galactic warfare. 275 star systems, scattered across 1200 sectors, are the hotly contested prizes.

You can command your colonies to build fleets of warships, and send them to do your bidding, or you can build strong planetary defenses to protect your hard won colonies. Choose from four basic ship types, arm them with a mixture of the thirteen available weapon systems, forge alliances, and destroy your enemies!

14 or 21 day deadlines. Each turn's mailed by the day after the deadline or the next turn is FREE! Guaranteed!

Rules, Set Up, 2 Turns: \$10.00

Rules only: \$5.00

Set Up and 2 Turns: \$7.50

Turns 1-10: \$4.00, Turns 11-20: \$4.50

Turns 21-on: \$5.00

has worked hard to achieve a standard of quality that is the envy of the industry. If you're playing G.S.I.'s games and not reading G.S.I.'s journal, you're only getting half the story! Rectification of this situation is only a check away! One year subscriptions are \$15.00, or you can take advantage of big savings and order our new 'two-year' sub for only \$25.00! Complete the experience, read 'Whispers of the Wood'!

Origins '90 is rapidly approaching that razzle-dazzle "Trump Palace" of gaming conventions. Last year, L.A. - this year, Atlanta GA! PBM turnout and support has been ever-growing at the last couple o' Cons, and this year's will be no exception. We at G.S.I. will be packing up the cars and heading north, with a whole slate of special events, symposiums, and surprises. Here are the dates and times. If you plan to attend, jot 'em down!

Middle-earth™ Play-by-Mail

A special symposium and sneak-preview of our latest, perhaps greatest, PBM creation, officially licensed through, and in cooperation with Iron Crown Enterprises and Tolkien Enterprises. This is a must-attend for fans of either the good Professor's works or cutting-edge PBM! Come early!

Location: Vienna Room

Date, Saturday, June 30th

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Hosted by: Pete Stassun and Bill Feild

PBMA Seminar

Lively discussions, questions and answers, round-robin panels. Find out the status of the PBM industry today, where it's at and where it's going. Catch some insights, and trade points of view on everybody's favorite postal past-time. Share your thoughts with the PBM moderators, including G.S.I.'s own Bill Feild, a PBMA Board of Directors' member.

Location: Fayette Room

Date: Saturday, June 30th

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hosted by: The PBMA

JFH GAMES

Overwhelming response has forced us to restrict new World War IV positions to the current customers for a while. From the feedback so far, the game seems to be a hit and well worth the investment of time and money to allow expansion. But rather than get swamped with more new customers, we will be making the processing more efficient and getting a second edition rulebook together first. Our major concern is to maintain the highest standard of processing possible.

We have no plans for any major game changes, although the second edition rulebook will have the errata compiled and contain some minor changes that a number of players have recommended. In principle, if its not broken, we won't be fixing it; too many PBM companies have revised their games when nothing was wrong with them.

We will make a general announcement when the game becomes available to new customers again. If you are interested in **World War IV**, please be patient and accept our apology. We are committed to keeping the processing standard of **World War IV** as high as possible and are planning on opening the game up again soon. Please watch this column for further updates, or write us directly.

MICRO SOFTWARE DESIGN

Andromeda Cluster #7 is now opening up and will start when 15-20 companies startups have been received. As in Games 5 and 6, each player will be allowed up to two companies, provided one is Business/Political and the other Criminal. Players desiring to start only a single company are urged to start a Criminal, rather than a Business company (it's easier to retaliate if someone attacks you). Andromeda Cluster is a fixed length (average 14 turns), computer moderated game with special actions. Turn fees for Game 7 will continue to be \$3.00 for the first 4 ships (one turn sheet), \$4.00 for 5-8 ships and \$5.00 for 9-12 ships (max 12 ships/3 turn sheets). There is no charge for battle reports or setups and the rules costs \$3.00. Players paying \$25.00 are credited with 2 free turns and sent the rules free in addition to account balance adjustments.

We continue to work on 'The Tome of Midkemia', our open-ended Fantasy PBM based

in the fantasy world popularized by Ray Feist's Magician series, and will hopefully be entering alpha-test in about 3 months.

Micro Software Design
8875 Pollard Ave
San Diego, CA 92123-2943
Compuserve 73210,3137

MINDGATE

Some interesting changes are in the works for **Stars of the Dark Well**. The most interesting and far-reaching is the concept of player-run federations. If you've read our *Gameline* articles in the past, you know that any four players can pool their resources to form an allegiance. Very soon, four allegiances will be able to pool their resources to form a federation. We're using "federation" here as a generic term. Actually, the founding players can set the government up to be just about anything they want, with a constitution, laws, a congress, or whatever suits them. There will be a few simple rules detailing a head of state's powers, how allegiances join or quit a federation, and other basic record keeping, but for the most part the players will be left to their own devices.

To date, there has really been only one federation in the game; the 2nd Dominion, which is a GM run entity. We think that the introduction of player-run governments will add a whole new dimension

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\$20 for set-up, manual and first two turns.
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to Stars of the Dark Well, especially in the area of diplomacy.

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PAPER TIGERS

The Land of Karrus continues to grow steadily. We now have players from Canada and England, as well as the good old U.S. of A. Several program improvements have been added recently to add even more flexibility and fun to the game. These have been well-received by our players and are working smoothly.

We would like to publicly thank Richard L. Smith for his article about **The Land of Karrus**. It appeared in **Paper Mayhem**, Issue #42. Richard has been playing the game for several months now and has checked out most game actions and a sizable portion of the Planet of Karrus. He definitely has a good feel for the **The Land of Karrus** and has done a fine job of summing up his first-hand knowledge. The article is an objective description of the game, and should help readers to get an idea of what it is all about.

We urge players who are curious about **The Land of Karrus** to read Richard Smith's article, and to read **Paper Mayhem's** "Activity Corner". The "Activity Corner" recounts the latest happen-

ings on the Planet of Karrus.

Want to know more? Call or write to us at Paper Tigers. We'll send you complete information about the game and the latest edition of the player newsletter, **Karrutian Kapsule**. Prefer to see the Rules before playing? A Rulebook can be purchased for \$5. Can't wait to start playing? Send \$10 for your set-up and first two turns. We welcome newcomers to the Planet. The more, the merrier!

Paper Tigers
PO Box 1547
Glendora, CA 91740
(818) 335-0835

PRECEDENCE

A new company, a new game and old faces has arrived on the PBM gaming scene. By "old faces" I mean that we are old hands at this having a total of fourteen years working experience in the industry. Together we have formed Precedence and are ready to release the first product of our combined talents. At this time I am pleased to present **Blasted Earth** to the PBM public.

Blasted Earth is set in a post holocaust Earth and will appeal to those players who like having a large amount of control on how his armies will fight in their battles (similar to the level of control found in miniature wargaming). The players start by creating their clan from a list of 35 distinctly dif-

ferent abilities. There are thousands of combinations possible allowing the player the chance to have a position that matches with his philosophies on waging war.

Once the game has started you will be able to perform actions of diplomacy, espionage and military conquest to further your goals in the game. How the player designed his clan is sure to effect the emphasis placed on each type of action. There are over 50 different orders that can be used in the game with a large diversity in their effects. This allows the players to make full use of their customized forces and strategies.

Players if they hope to win will need to pay attention to the abilities and tactics of the other players. Changing a combat force's equipment, retreat levels and battle tactics allows you to alter their performance in response to the capabilities of enemy forces. These changes give a certain amount of flex in the combat forces abilities and permits the tactics to play an important part in every engagement.

The quality of the game we feel is no less impressive. It is 100% computer moderated, the output is in easy to read text and charts arranged for maximum ease in accessing its data. Combats are done in a blow by blow manner and are accompanied by a visual representation of the battle. Each turn you receive a map showing your land holdings in the game. We also include a monthly newsletter to all of our active players free of charge.



THE DAY AFTER

"The Ultimate Survival" ©

Colonel! I'm tracking multiple incoming targets. . . point of origin: the USSR!" "@\$#! This is it, son! You know what to do!" "Yes, sir! . . . primary defense systems have been deployed. They're on — WHAT!? They're off the scope! Systems are down!" "The SDI's boy! Give 'em everything we've got!" "No good, sir! Systems are completely DEAD! . . . here they come."

On July 19 2014 at 4:17 a.m. the U.S.A. launched the first wave of its counterstrike. Within 47 minutes civilization as we knew it was obliterated. Only a few survived. Those in power escaped to off-world colonies before the holocaust. . . and then there's YOU!!!

As leader of a small group of five, you must provide them with the equipment and weapons needed to survive. Everyone in your group has \$100, a heavy weapon, a light weapon and one hand weapon (chosen by you). Whether you will survive by salvaging and selling equipment you find or by simply TAKING from others is up to you. If one of your people is killed, his possessions will be transferred to a new man (which we will provide). If your entire group is killed, your possessions will be given to the enemy.

Ask about the following games:

War Lords
Star Trader
Conquest & Crusades

Set-Up Costs: \$10.00

(Setup, Rules, 4 turn credits).

Rules - \$5.00, Turns - \$2.00

WRITE TO: Steve Sparks
808 Stratton Street, Deltona, Florida 32725

All of this makes for a great game but is no better than the company that runs it. One needs only look at the latest PBM survey to see the truth of this statement. We at Precedence know that success depends upon you, our customer, getting the kind of treatment you deserve. No problem, we intend to give it to you. No matter how big our company grows our business is service and the customer comes first.

Drop us a line and we will send you a free, no obligation copy of the rules for our game.

Precedence
P.O. Box 27946
Tempe, AZ 82585-7946

SCHUBEL & SON INC.

We welcome five new licensees. David Pike has taken over running IRV's game of Company Commander in Canada. Michael Horner will be running Crusade from the East Coast. Rhann Postal Games in England will be running Company Commander in Europe. Robot Armies will be starting up from Central Gaming in Kansas City. We have signed a contract with Brian Keerie in England to run Global Supremacy and Ancient Empires. This means many new games will be starting so the time is right to sign up!

SILVIUS AND BERCHTOLD

Though we are new to *Paper Mayhem*, we are by no means new to the gaming world. Our game, **SOVEREIGNTY, A Game of Contemporary Geopolitical Confrontations**, has been played and enjoyed by a rather select group since 1986. The review and advertisement in this issue explains some of the mechanics involved in the game so we would like to devote this space to the general philosophy behind its creation. First and foremost, this is a game designed by us and for us. Its original purpose was to serve as an educational tool for the student of contemporary geopolitics, and for the amusement of ourselves and a small circle of our fellow gamers. As such, we were able to construct a simulation which would reflect our roles as educators in the fields of theoretical economics and international relations, our years of board gaming experience, and our own philosophy of what makes a superior simulation. In designing **SOVEREIGNTY**, we sought to develop a game which would:

1) reflect the procedure used in formulating foreign policy in today's world. This involves identifying goals and objectives, analyzing domestic and international situation factors which impact these goals, and formulating a diplomatic, economic, or military plan which will bring the nation closer to the objectives it seeks.

2) show the interrelation of economic and

political considerations in formulating foreign policy. The motivation behind any coherent foreign policy is self interest and this self interest is normally tied to an economic and/or political benefit for the nation executing its policy.

3) capture the style and "feel" of the "classic" board games of the 1960's and 70's. We sought a clean, playable system which would emphasize the military skill of the players involved and minimize the element of chance. This is done through a unique combat resolution system which not only places a premium on skill but also demonstrates the interrelation of combined arms on today's battlefield.

4) place the emphasis on decision making, and demonstrate the effect of the choices made on the relative strength of a modern nation. In our opinion, the crucial element which makes a game interesting are the choices and decisions that one is called upon to make. We believe that in giving a wide range of "guns or butter" choices the player can vicariously experience the problems faced by modern policy makers as he weights the potential effects of each decision he makes.

5) maximize direct player involvement in the game. No nation in today's complex world can hope to prosper without involvement in the world community. As such, we attempted to develop a simulation where intelligent, active diplomacy is a necessity for survival. This is accomplished by having each player deal directly with the other

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For an unparalleled gaming experience, sign up for BELTER and join the thousands of

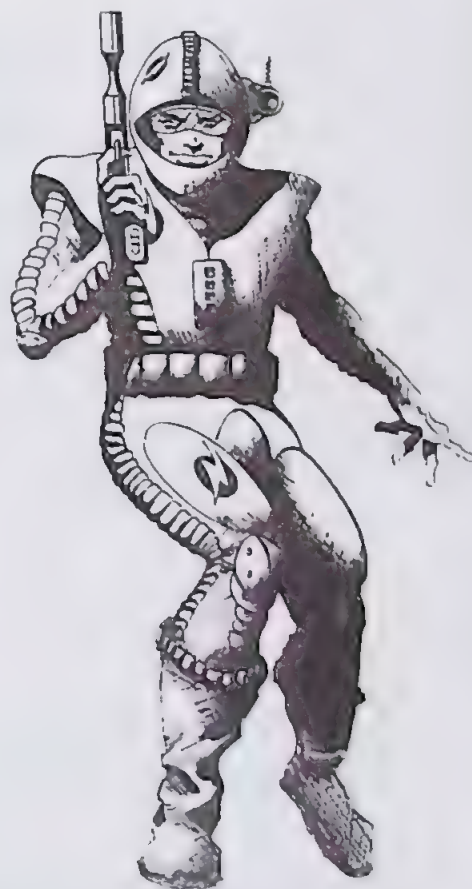
people who currently play P.B.M. games. BELTER is a 100% computer moderated game.

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LET AND A STARTING POSITION
WITH TWO FREE TURN CREDITS.**

**CLASSIFIED INFORMATION
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SANDY, UT. 84091**

Turn fees: \$1.50 single turn
\$3.00 double turn

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players in the game through the publication of his monthly acts.

6) enable the players themselves to monitor the game. We believe that simulation gaming attracts individuals with the intelligence and common sense to handle the "housekeeping tasks" necessary in any multi-player PBM game. Through a unique system, all actions taken by the players are quickly and efficiently resolved without the involvement of a "gamemaster". In addition, any technical disputes or errors can be resolved through litigation in a judicial system staffed by players who are periodically elected to various official positions.

Thus we have hopefully provided you with some insight into the philosophical origins of our game. Last fall, we began to expand our exposure through direct canvassing. Through the contacts we established with our players, we learned of the existence of Paper Mayhem and are now making this fine simulation available to the general public. If you wish more information on how to become involved in what one veteran PBM player has dubbed "the thinking man's simulation" write to:

Silvius and Berchtold
111 Old Derry Road
Londonderry, NH 03053

SIMCOARUM SYSTEMS

GRAND ALLIANCE continues to grow. Games #4 and #5 were started since our last Gameline entry. GA is up for some minor but im- changes this coming summer as we continue to improve the game's system.

A NATIONAL WILL is off to a good start. Released last January, we've been pleased with its progress. Since January games #9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 have been initialized. One of two playtest games of ANW has been completed. The winner was Mitchell Rigby.

We are nearing the completion of programming for FREEDOM (the hard way) and we should be commencing in-house playtesting very soon. Regular playtesting will begin shortly after.

The second draft for GUNS OF 14 is completed and programming will begin on that game this summer. The more research I have done on WW1, the more fascinating this period and type of warfare has become to me. GUNS will not be for the shy.

And don't forget, our newsletter is free upon request.

SIMTECH

Simulation Technologies, or SimTech, is a new player in the PBM gameworld. As such, there is some "settling in" to do, but more importantly, it means having had the chance to absorb a lot of the best from the industry.

SimTech offers a wide choice of methods for submitting your turn, U.S. mail, modem, or our touch tone reponse system. Modem and touch tone entry services will be available 24 hours a day. At SimTech we will make every effort to make turn entry easy and error free.

SimTech's first offering, Arcane Challenge, is a character oriented game of strategy and tactics. The object of the game is to be in possession of a powerful artifact (The Arcane Orb) on or after turn twenty. As such, its anybody's game at turn nineteen, assuming you can survive that long....

Your position is one of five spellcasters, each a mighty representative of their respective guilds. Each spellcaster can choose from among several dweomers to achieve their goals, including those which summon powerful allies to do their bidding.

The game is played on six 'levels'. Each level is a floor which is floating in a magical dimension. The levels are connected by several portals, the manner of which is left to the player to discover. The features of the levels change with every game, so each is a unique and different experience.

When you order our rulebook, you will be treated to a concise telling of the game, some fine artwork, and a sample map (a picture's worth a thousand words). What you won't find is a lot of complicated rules and details.

Orders are straightforward, and turns are easy to fill out. As already mentioned, the staff at Sim Tech will bend over backwards to accomodate you. Call or write for your free rule book and set-up,

POWERSTAR

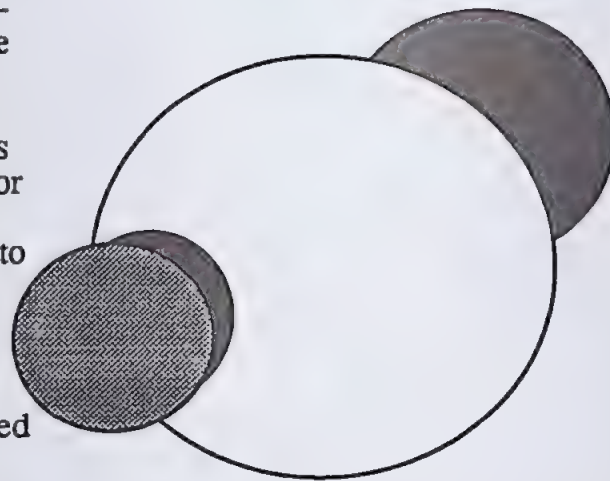
THE ULTIMATE GAME OF GALACTIC CONQUEST

There are over three hundred solar systems in the galaxy, and of the 20 civilizations that flourish, **only one will rise to rule them all.**

Each player starts the game as the ruler of one of the great civilizations of the galaxy. He alone determines which solar systems will be explored and colonized, or simply ravaged for their resources, and left a barren wasteland. Which systems will be shared with allies to create extremely profitable centers of trade and, which systems will be transformed into the most versatile tool ever created -- a **POWERSTAR.**

A **POWERSTAR TURN** consists of 10 commands picked from a total of over 30 effective and streamlined command options.

TURN RESULTS report the outcome of each command given, commands by others that have noticeable effect, a civilization status report, and a report giving the progress (but not identity) of the leading player.



Set up and first turn: \$5.00
Subsequent turns: \$3.00 ea
Turns: every 2 weeks.

SOUTH BAY GAMES - PO Box 1491 - Torrance, CA 90505

you won't be disappointed.

Sim Tech
9728 3rd Ave. Suite #629
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11209
(718) 921-6512

VORTEX SIMULATIONS

Vortex Simulations is proud to announce that on 7 May 1990, agreements were signed between Infinite Gaming (UK) and Vortex Simulations (US) for United States/Canadian/Latin American rights for St. Valentine's Day Massacre II!!!

Programs and materials are expected by mid June, with review and acceptance to take the remainder of June. Providing no problems are encountered with getting rulebooks printed on time, or getting the programs to run on the Vortex system, the first game should be able to start in early July. Ad submissions will be going out as soon as artwork is ready, so as to have the players lined up for that first game.

Game pricing will be: turns at \$4.00 and increase .50 per rank (as position and printouts grow) to \$5.50 per turn. Top player, The Capo Di Tutti Capo, will play free as long as he holds that title. Setups will be \$10.00 and include rules, setup turn, and first two regular turns. The only extra charge will be for players who wish to receive turns over MCI Mail, they will have extra charges equal to the cost of sending the previous turn over MCI.

WARLORD STRATEGIC GAMING

Rules of Engagement

At long (long) last, it is time! Playtests One and Two are being cranked up. The armies, air forces and navies of the worlds are in the process of being set up. A period of massive buildup is expected, after which the Rommels, Montgomerys and Pattons of the world shall unleash their incomprehensible military might against each other! What will happen then depends entirely upon the planning abilities of the players. Without turns sheets, they enjoy infinite flexibility in the types and scope of operations they can undertake. They also face the need to think with a military mind. Can you guess your enemy's strategies? Do you have enough MBT's? Where in the world will you buy those missiles you do not build? What, oh what will you work towards in your R & D shops?

The two playtests have barely started, and already some players stand out. There are those in both campaigns who have shown exceptional interest, enthusiasm and ingenuity, as attested to by WSG's never-empty P.O. Box.

PLAYTEST ONE (NUCLEAR) Uh oh, here comes "Wally World". I already have a stack of mail from my "extreme case". He's chomping at the bit, impatient to make life difficult for those around him. How many pages of R & D? Oh good grief, Mr. Premier! Then of course, there's Mr. Knox. He is just plain warped-I like that. He ought to add some spice (ahem).

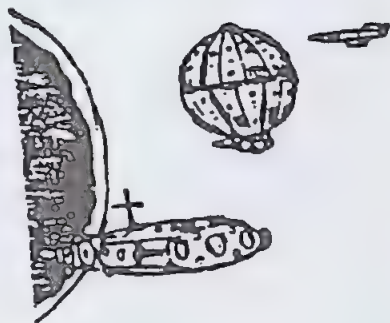
PLAYTEST TWO (NON NUCLEAR): You gentlemen are in for some real trouble as soon as The Major goes looking for real estate - namely

yours! I know what this person is capable of - his nation should include a Surgeon General's warning!! And then there's His Grandness the Raif of Romulia - sheesh!

All in all, even with things barely beginning, I am confident that all players can look forward to exciting campaigns - I look forward to moderating you all, with some trepidation and much anticipation. There are a lot of very intelligent and original people involved, the environment will be alive with destructive nations inconveniencing each other. Good luck to all!



A New Play By Mail Game Is Here EXODUS



You are in Command of a fleet of ships that has gone into the galaxy looking for the enemy. The enemy is also out there looking for you. You control a fleet on either the Alien side or the Human side along with many other players and their fleets. The object is to conquer the Galaxy, but the other side is also controlled by players who are out to do the same thing. Internal rivalry along with fights against the enemy makes this game a challenging one. Diplomacy is an important part of play as you explore the galaxy in the quest for domination. A fast paced game with many battles and a quick consistent turn around time, EXODUS is for people who enjoy tactical space warfare gaming.

Regular prices are \$2.25 per turn for your first fleet.
Only \$1.00 per turn for a second fleet built with the first.

With a 10 day turn around time, you will spend between \$6.75 and \$9.75 a Month. Compare that price with other games.

Completely computer moderated so there is no favoritism by any game master

Rule Book \$1.50; Set up \$1.50

Please specify if you want to be set up in a game or just want a Rule Book. You will be placed on the side of your choice if room in the game permits.

Grenade Games
P. O. Box 1908
Boston, MA 02205

LEGENDS: A REVIEW

PART II

By David W. Dyche

Legends is a serial-processed, very long-term but close-ended (estimated 3-10 years for a game to end) 99+ computer-moderated (rare and limited special actions) sword-and-sorcery combined power- and role-playing game. It has variable turn costs ranging from \$3.50 for 1-2 characters up to \$13.00 for a (8-page) large kingdom. Monthly production for positions with population is \$1.50 and runs off standing orders, and the fee is charged only if the standing orders are changed with the special production turnsheet. Average turn costs are \$4.50-\$7.50 with no hidden charges. Turns are run at least 14 days apart. One position per household per game. Return printouts average 6-20 pages depending upon the type of position.

Last issue the first segment of this article was published introducing the game, the options the players had for setup, the rules, and the company that runs Legends. If you have not yet read it you may want to obtain a copy from the publisher. If you already have a copy of the rules but have not yet sent in your setup, read this article carefully and glean what you may. It is by no means comprehensive, but is rather representative of some of the options the players that the writer knows used. In a game as broad and deep as Legends, there is plenty of room for new ideas, strategies and tactics.

SETUP OPTIONS AND STRATEGIES

The variety of setup designs, races, cultures and particularly the design of the main and subordinate characters allows the player to tailor his or her position to his or her position to his or her own goals, desires and style of play. Roleplayers and empire builders, destroyers and fighters, generals and administrators can plan, plot and execute to their heart's content. I will now outline as many of the possible types of setups as I and my fellow players have thought of. Almost all of these setups are of a "specialist" nature, that is, they are designed for a particular playing style and for a particular goal. There are an almost infinite combination of different characters depending on the attributes, characteristics and skills chosen, but, like real life, the viable and successful types are far and fewer in number.

First I will outline the Overlord option. The Overlord has a type C 40-point character, which is pretty weak and who can't do a great job at anything. However, the one thing it does have going for it is the five other characters. Those characters can have a total of fifteen skills among them, and, since characters can teach each other skills at basic level 1, this means you can put all your points into either one skill (half possible) and the rest in attributes and characteristics, two skills (all your

points) or even no skills and all points into attributes and characteristics, getting all of your other skills taught by other characters. This is especially true with the "level 1 only" skills like Ranger, which cannot be increased with practice. Use the techniques outlined later in the character-building section to maximize your main character.

The first decision for the Overlord is that of Race. For the purely development-oriented Overlord, who wants the biggest and best economy, growth potential, and is willing to take some risks, the Human is by far the best. Humans start with the most population (therefore the most craftsmen, farmers, etc.), make the most money (by virtue of having the most population) and grow the fastest. They are very nearly the weakest race in combat, though, and for the best development should choose a Grassland (coastal if possible) province, which also provides no real defensive advantages. On the other hand, there are about 50% humans in the overall game population distribution, which allows for easier diplomacy and consolidation of gains. Those Overlords who want to be a bit more defensive, and to ensure against getting attacked early, should take Elves, Orcs or Dwarves, all of whom have acceptable growth rates and who can start in forests, mountains, swamps or other rough terrain. Elves get bonuses in the forest, for example, and also can tailor their initial soldier mix to provide for maximum forest defense.

For the Overlord who simply wants the most potential for large-race development, the initial advantage of Giants or Trolls is hard to beat. A Giant is worth 3 training level 1 men or so, and a war-oriented Overlord can start early on his conquests. This is not as good in the long-term, though, because down the road the Human Overlords and others will have found and added the larger races to their empires, providing a pool of unskilled population from which to train soldiers, and will have developed an economy to support any ventures made.

The next choice for the overlord is your culture type--civilized, barbarian or nomad. Civilized cultures are the weakest militarily, but the strongest economically, so if you choose this option you must plan on using your better growth rate to offset your disadvantage in the long run. Barbarian cultures are the strongest militarily, but are hampered by slower growth rates and some negative modifiers to most diplomacy (would YOU trust a barbarian?). Nomad cultures are in between the two militarily, and start without defenses. However, their population segments can live off the land, and the "location" of their camp is mobile. In other words, most locations in the game are immobile, but nomads can move en masse, and quickly. For those who

want all their eggs in one basket, and who wants to wander about without building a stationary power base, the nomad camp is ideal.

Overlords must then choose their troops weapons. There are five different starting troop segments, so five different weapons can be chosen, one for each. 10% of your soldiers are heavy infantry with an initially higher skill level. These soldiers should be armed with an unspecialized weapon like a broadsword or battleaxe, as you can't be sure where you will need to use them. 15% of your soldiers will be mounted, and unless you are a nomad who intends to avoid a fight in all cases, choose the lance for your cavalry. Its charge bonus is unbeatable and in any battle will either be held in reserve for a countercharge, or sent on a flanking mission to try to smash the enemy early on. In either case the shock value is paramount. Choose the rest of your armaments according to the terrain you suspect you might start in (HINT: ask for a terrain type, more than likely they'll give it to you.)

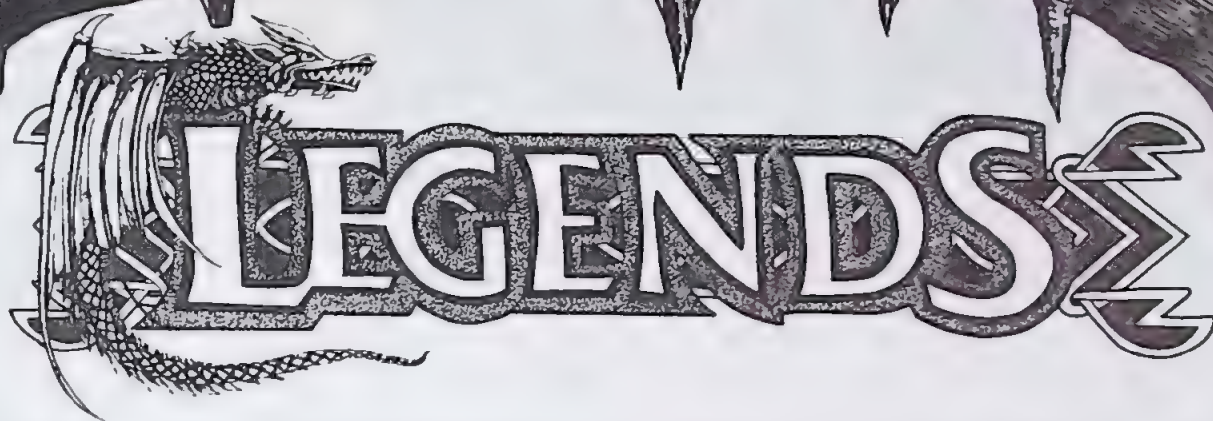
For the Mercenary position type all of the above decisions must also be made, subject to your own goals. The Mercenary position will have about 15-20% more soldiers than the Overlord, they will be somewhat better trained, and the Mercenary has a lot less population to deal with. The main advantage the Merc position has over the Overlord is in its main character. With a type D (second-strongest) main character there are a lot more options available. The Merc position therefore is a compromise position for the player who wants it all. It offers security, flexibility and is a good value for your play dollar.

The other position types are the Adventure Party and the Hero. The adventure party with its six characters headed by a type D gives maximum character play and power, while the Hero position is the only one with the awesome type E character, and is the best way to really specialize early on.

SETUP STRATEGIES

This section is the meat of this installment of your introduction to Legends, and, while no means comprehensive, covers many viable setup strategies you can use and are likely to see out there. Through conversation and contacts with a couple of dozen players most of the common options have been explored.

I say setup STRATEGIES rather than simply setups because the way you set up, and particularly the character type and skills you choose, predetermine your course of play for the early game. The things you choose to start with will determine the strengths and weaknesses of your position, and you



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- * **Turn Costs:** \$3.50 tp \$15.00
- * **Turn Results:** From 5 to 100 pages
- * **Type of Moderation:** Computer moderated, some games have optional special actions.

Initial Position Options:

Realm: A small, adequately defended town with a decent leader and five subordinate characters

Mercenary: A nice well defended castle, with a good leader and three subordinate characters.

Adventure Party: A good leader with five subordinate characters.

Hero: A exceptional leader and a single subordinate character.

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will have to work within that framework.

Most of these strategies will be based on one major thing: one skill, taken to its maximum by your main character. A few strategies require high levels of two skills, and even fewer require a broader distribution. Your main character, will initially be the only character who will be able to do anything really well. Most of your more minor characters will need to spend several turns practicing their skills or attributes before they can be very useful.

In our experience the Hero option is the most popular one—about 35% of players with whom I am acquainted chose the Hero. Therefore I will outline the Hero option first. Most things which apply to the Hero apply, only to a lesser extent, to the other positions.

The first principle in designing a Hero is that one should nearly always choose an Arcane (magic) skill. Because the number of spells allowed to be known initially depends not on your skill rating but on your character type (A through E) your E character gets to know 10 spells even if he or she takes only skill level 1, in an Arcane. Also, since any particular character can only know one arcane art, one can deduce that magic is very useful and must, in the gamemaster's opinion, be limited in that manner.

Secondly, your Hero should have a Personal Combat rating of at least 10. Since your PC largely determines how tough you are to kill, you should be at least tough enough to survive one round of combat with even a very tough character so you can live to run away. Having an Arcane skill will help in this regard too, as your pre-battle combat spell will do the enemy some damage or protect you from some of theirs.

The third principle is, if it is worth doing, it is worth doing well. You are allowed to put up to half of your character-building points into any one skill or attribute, so you should probably do so for your major skill. Since the 'average' chance of a successful practice is around skill level 10, and by skill level 20 it gets very difficult, 'buying' an initial rating above 20 puts you in a position probably years ahead of someone starting that skill from scratch.

THE FIGHTER

This is the pure personal combat specialist. The objective is to get the highest number of attack and defense points for fighting against other characters or monsters, to be able to dish out and take so much punishment that no one will even want to fight you but will want to follow you into a monster's lair. One of the larger races is imperative. A Giant has the highest Strength, which adds to your combat and makes it easier to carry your armor and possessions without penalty, but the Troll has that high Constitution, which allows you to heal a lot faster, and the strength is not much lower. If you are willing to take the extremely bad diplomacy modifiers, that is, if you don't ever want to recruit any NPCs to serve you, the Troll is for you. Add a few more

points to your Strength and bring your Dex up to above average. Take an Arcane skill and choose Empathic Self-Cure for one of your duel spells. This nifty spell will transfer any preexisting wounds directly to your enemy before the duel, so your damage is now his damage, and you start out fresh! This spell is only really useful when you have a large capacity to be wounded, since the wounds are transferred as points, not as a percentage. For example, if I have a Combat Rating (wound points) of 200, and am 50% wounded for 100 points, and my enemy has 120 Combat Rating and is unwounded, the Empathic Self-Cure will transfer 100 points to him leaving him with 20 left, an easy kill.

If you decide to take an Arcane rating at level 1 only (just to get the 10 spells) then take another duel spell which does not vary in power with your skill rating, like Blur Illusion or Warlock Armor. The same applies to the battle spells chosen. If you decide to take a high rating, especially if you decide

on a maxed-out (31-skill-level) Arcane rating, take a spell which increases in power with your skill. Evil Eye is one of the best of these.

A special combat skill is a must for the Fighter. If you want maximum flexibility, Ranger is unbeatable. Berserker is the best all-around combat skill, for a Berserker gets +100% with any weapon used, with the -2 defense being a small price to pay. Knight skill is not quite as helpful but it is also good. However, to save points for your main character, have your sidekick buy the skills initially and simply teach your main character the combat skills you choose. This allows you to put more points into your personal combat.

A sample fighter, tailored for character combat, might look like this: (Character #1)

This is an extremely nasty, if rather limited, character. He must learn his combat skills from his sidekick, and should immediately begin practicing Tactics and his Arcane skill.

Player Registration Sheets

Character #1

Character Name: Iron Robert Race: Troll
Character type (A,B,C,D, or E): E Religion ID#: 3-0m

Characteristic / Attributes	Base value	Ending Rating	Additional cost for for skill increase (+1)	Total point cost
Strength	20	44	1	24
Dexterity	6	28	1	22
Constitution	20	20	1.5	0
Beauty	4	4	1	0
Personal Combat Rating	1	25	1	24
Tactics	0	0	2	0
Influence	0	0	3	0

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 70

Skill Name	ID#	Cost Rating 1	Cost for +1 Increase	End Rating	Total Point Cost
WARLOCK	7	10	1	1	10

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 10
TOTAL CHARACTER POINTS: 80

Character #2

Character Name: Robert Eeley Race: Human
Character type (A,B,C,D, or E): E Religion ID#: 3-0m

Characteristic / Attributes	Base value	Ending Rating	Additional cost for for skill increase (+1)	Total point cost
Strength	10	10	1	0
Dexterity	10	10	1	0
Constitution	10	10	1.5	0
Beauty	10	10	1	0
Personal Combat Rating	1	10	1	9
Tactics	0	20	2	40
Influence	0	0	3	0

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 49

Skill Name	ID#	Cost Rating 1	Cost for +1 Increase	End Rating	Total Point Cost
Enchanter	8	10	1	22	31

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 31
TOTAL CHARACTER POINTS: 80

THE GENERAL

The general is a specialized character designed to win battles. Since he or she will be a Hero, the first thing needed is someone else to supply the soldiers. Therefore, this type of character is most useful in planned conjunction with Overlords or Mercs. The main attributes of the General are a maximum Tactics, an above-average Personal Combat (to train good soldiers) and an Arcane with good battle spells. A special skill to train special soldiers is useful, like Ranger or Spy. A typical General might look something like this:

(Character #2)

The extra skills like Spy or Ranger would be bought and taught by the sidekick. Also, an Arcane which allows the General to train some kind of magically enhanced soldiers is a good investment.

THE INFLUENTIAL PRIEST

This character's primary skill is that of Influence. With maximized influence he or she seeks to gather up weaker characters and small locations early on, and, after enough prestige is attained, go after some major characters. This character also has a Priest skill of at least 15 or so that the Greater Blessing spell may be used immediately. By using 11 points of Greater Blessing (10 for 100% boost plus 1 to overcome one's own magical resistance) he can have an influence of 26 on the first turn of the game. This is enough to give a very high chance to take over any character with average loyalty and a prestige of 2 or below. The character should be human, for humans have the least negative modifiers when dealing with other races. Also, over 50% of the NPCs out there are human.

This character should also have a reasonable personal combat rating, because of the Blessing will double that as well. A few points of tactics wouldn't hurt either. As a priest this character will be able to train Blessed Fanatics, and if he or she chooses the OM religion there are duel spells as well. A typical influential Priest might look like this:

(Character #3)

If you want to establish some permanent locations early on, start looking at these villages under 100 population or so. There is a pretty good chance that the leaders of those villages will have a low enough prestige that you will be able to take them over. If a character has a higher prestige than you do, you have no chance of bringing them over to your side. If you would rather gather up as many characters as you can, go to the nearest major location, where there are normally a score or so of characters just waiting for someone with a silver tongue to snatch them up.

THE ARCANE MASTER

The primary attribute of this character is that he or she takes one of the secular Arcane arts at maximum value (31). This provides a large jump on anyone attempting to work their way up from

Player Registration Sheets

Character #3

Character Name: Cardinal Richelieu Race: H
Character type (A,B,C,D, or E): E Religion ID#: 3-OM

Characteristic / Attributes	Base value	Ending Rating	Additional cost for for skill increase (+1)	Total point cost
Strength	10	10	1	
Dexterity	10	10	1	
Constitution	10	10	1.5	
Beauty	10	10	1	
Personal Combat Rating	1	10	1	9
Tactics	0	4	2	8
Influence	0	13	3	39

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 56

Skill Name	ID#	Cost Rating 1	Cost for +1 Increase	End Rating	Total Point Cost
PRIEST	10	10	1	15	24

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 24
TOTAL CHARACTER POINTS: 80

Player Registration Sheets

Character #4

Character Name: Merlin the Great Race: Elf
Character type (A,B,C,D, or E): E Religion ID#: 1-Alvareth

Characteristic / Attributes	Base value	Ending Rating	Additional cost for for skill increase (+1)	Total point cost
Strength	8	10	1	2
Dexterity	16	16	1	0
Constitution	8	10	1.5	3
Beauty	20	20	1	0
Personal Combat Rating	1	15	1	14
Tactics	0	0	2	0
Influence	0	0	3	0

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 19

Skill Name	ID#	Cost Rating 1	Cost for +1 Increase	End Rating	Total Point Cost
WIZARD	1	10	1	31	40
STEALTH	14	3	2	10	21

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 61
TOTAL CHARACTER POINTS: 80

Character #5

Character Name: Mother Mary Fay Race: Dwarf
Character type (A,B,C,D, or E): E Religion ID#: 2-Raisneah

Characteristic / Attributes	Base value	Ending Rating	Additional cost for for skill increase (+1)	Total point cost
Strength	12	12	1	0
Dexterity	8	10	1	2
Constitution	16	16	1.5	0
Beauty	2	10	1	8
Personal Combat Rating	1	10	1	9
Tactics	0	0	2	0
Influence	0	3	3	9

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 28

Skill Name	ID#	Cost Rating 1	Cost for +1 Increase	End Rating	Total Point Cost
Priestly Vows	10	10	1	31	40
Rumormonger	17	2	1	11	12

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 52
TOTAL CHARACTER POINTS: 80

base level. This character should also have some other skills to fall back on for when he or she runs out of spell points or wants to do something different, and a moderate personal combat rating for personal protection. Whatever Arcane the character has, it should be in line with what the player wants to do in the style he or she wants to play. If you want to make and/or sell magic items, be an Enchanter. If you want to gather special resources and summon powerful beings from the other planes, be a Summoner. If you want to be a master of information, be a Seer.

A typical Arcane Master might look like this:

Character #4

The first thing this character should do is find a guild in his or her specialty, head for it, and split his or her time between making money by whatever method is convenient, and researching spells inside the guild, which costs money. Obtaining some of the higher-level spells early on can be very advantageous. You should be able to research level 4 spells inside your guild with a high chance of suc-

cess if you have a 31 rating.

THE PRIEST

The priest's primary skill is, of course, Holy Vows, but, unlike some other characters who use their Priestly skills to augment other attributes, the primary object of the Priest is to establish churches and promote his or her chosen religion. Although there are only four starting religions in Crown of Avalon, there are certainly more out there. A previously unknown religion has already been found and there have been only three turns processed in Legends 1 as of this writing.

A good priest should have, of course, maximum Priest skill. He or she should also have a reasonably good Personal Combat, and since the goal of a good priest is to acquire influence upon the events around him to do the work of his deity, rather than to acquire secular power, which does not ensure long-term cooperation, a few points of Influence are a good idea. A successful priest will

have a network of guilds (churches) and characters, all of which should strive to become more and more indispensable to the economy and smooth operation of the cities they inhabit. A typical Priest might look like this:

(Character #5)

The beginning Priest should immediately head for a player controlled town and solicit the materials to build a church in return for the church's economic boost down the road. Failing this, a more dangerous method might be to challenge an established priest for control of a church. This is not recommended. A Priest is not the best standalone character, but can be very valuable to an alliance.

THE BARD

The bard character is for a player who wants to wander around, be welcomed wherever he goes, swap information, and not build up any real power base other than that of being friendly with everyone. Maximum Bard skill is needed, and a reasonably high Arcane rating ensures extra combat power for defense, and provides some flexibility in the absence of bardic opportunities. Stealth is a nice skill to have, in case your welcome is suddenly worn out, or for the mercantile among you, Merchant skill. A typical Bard might look like this:

(Character #6)

A starting bard should use the Bard Blessing action right off. This has the effect of about one-half of a Druid bless, about one-quarter of a Priest bless, based on the Bard skill rating of the blesser. A skill of 18 will yield about a 45% boost, and at no cost in spellpoints, and the character is changed to Blessed status, which has some as-yet undetermined benefits of resistance to magical and special attacks. The starting Bard has a song known already, but should wait until arrival at an inn before singing it. This will boost the strength of the inn, may result in a prestige increase for the Bard, and only at an inn or Bard's College can new songs be learned.

Player Registration Sheets

Character #6

Character Name: Bill Shay Quspeer Race: Half Elf
Character type (A,B,C,D, or E): E Religion ID#: 1-Alvaroth

Characteristic / Attributes	Base value	Ending Rating	Additional cost for for skill increase (+1)	Total point cost
Strength	10	10	1	0
Dexterity	14	14	1	0
Constitution	10	10	1.5	0
Beauty	14	14	1	0
Personal Combat Rating	1	11	1	10
Tactics	0	0	2	0
Influence	0	0	3	0

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 10

Skill Name	ID#	Cost Rating 1	Cost for +1 Increase	End Rating	Total Point Cost
BARD	11	5	2	18	39
ILLUSIONIST	3	10	1	15	24
STEALTH	14	3	2	3	7

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 70
TOTAL CHARACTER POINTS: 80

Character #7

Character Name: Jacques Deripper Race: Orc
Character type (A,B,C,D, or E): E Religion ID#: 4-Gorgoroth

Characteristic / Attributes	Base value	Ending Rating	Additional cost for for skill increase (+1)	Total point cost
Strength	12	12	1	0
Dexterity	8	10	1	2
Constitution	12	12	1.5	0
Beauty	4	4	1	0
Personal Combat Rating	1	14	1	13
Tactics	0	0	2	0
Influence	0	0	3	0

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 15

Skill Name	ID#	Cost Rating 1	Cost for +1 Increase	End Rating	Total Point Cost
ASSASSIN	12	5	2	10	23
STEALTH	14	3	2	19	39
THIEF	15	3	2	1	3

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 65
TOTAL CHARACTER POINTS: 80

THE ASSASSIN

The Assassin is optimized to kill other characters, and get away with it. This character needs more than one high-level skill to operate successfully. A high Assassin skill is necessary, but perhaps even more so is a high Stealth, which will allow you to get away with your hits. Illusionist skill is useful, although not imperative, for the Invisibility spell. With the high Stealth requirement this character may consider taking Spy or Thief, both of which also depend upon Stealth for their success. A good Personal Combat is important, for if the character does get caught he needs enough to survive a fight with the target character. Any extra points should be put into Dexterity. A typical Assassin might look like this:

(Character #7)

The Assassin should practice his Assassin and

Thief skills, and begin looking for someone to use his talents for. Murder-for-hire could be profitable, although probably not early on. This character is an Orc because it is the only Small size race available in Crown of Avalon. Being Small reduces your chances of being spotted. It is probably a good idea to maintain the Stealth toggle 'on' whenever speed of movement does not preclude it. If they can't spot you, they can't figure you out or kill you.

THE SPY

The Spy is very similar to the Assassin except he angles for information rather than mayhem. In this case the Illusionist talent or Seer should be taken. The Spy should have maximum Stealth, a good Personal Combat, and reasonable Spy skill. The stealth is more important than the other skills because, in most players' view, it is better to fail and get away than to succeed and get caught.

The Spy is also suited as a member of an alliance or faction, rather than as an independent player.

THE THIEF

The thief character is also a stealth-based character, and needs the maximum Stealth skill and a good Thief skill, some Personal Combat and possibly an Arcane. The major difference and advantage that the Thief enjoys is that this character can operate independently or as part of a group. A skilled and prudent thief can amass quite a stash of items and money if he hits the right hoardes. Alternately, he can employ his skills to the benefit of his alliance or faction, as well as founding guilds for other young criminals.

THE MERCHANT

The merchant's main function is to trade, buying and selling tradegoods and scarce items or resources to make money. The Merchant does not necessarily need a very high merchant skill early

on, but he or she should be optimized to travel, survive and take advantage of opportunities. The Merchant should have an Arcane skill for all of the reasons mentioned before. Ranger might be a good skill to have, especially if exploration, some combat bonuses and the ability to gather special flora is something you want.

Of course have your sidekick teach it to you to save points. Rumormonger is a possibility, and for an Arcane, Enchanter might be a good idea since a traveling merchant will have a lot of opportunity to pick up the materials necessary to make items later. A typical merchant might look like this:

(Character #8)

A merchant's first priority is to establish some trade routes by finding marketplaces, gather some capital (taking a non-heroic job in a major location should raise enough to get you started), buy some tradegoods and head down the road at a good clip to another major location to sell them. As the world economy starts to rev up other opportunities will present themselves. By searching out the marketplace numbers of as many major locations as possible you will also be able to capitalize on opportunities as soon as you see them. As you make more and more money you can purchase virtually anything you desire from players. Buying a ship of some kind as soon as you are able is a good investment, for sea travel is much faster and probably safer than land travel, and the farther you go with those tradegoods the more money you'll make.

These are some of the better Hero main character strategies. All of these characters can be adapted to the other position types, although they will have lesser skills. Some of them may actually work better all around as leaders of parties, castles or towns. For example, the General would be particularly effective as a Mercenary leader, since he or she could start conquering places immediately with the soldiers already at hand. The Influential Priest could also gain advantage from

the fact that as the leader of a Mercenary force, he could probably boost his Prestige more rapidly than the Hero by winning battles and conquering locations, sponsoring tournaments of various sorts with his own main character weighted to win, and so on. A Mercenary Summoner could rapidly gather special resources and would be able to convert them directly into cash with his own populace. The Priest or Druid would be a good leader of an Overlord position because of the availability of guild-making materials and the developmental benefits of those skills.

BEGINNING PLAY

In Legends 1 all combat was prohibited for the first few turns to ensure that the combat programs were running correctly and also to reduce the prospect of anyone getting wiped out before their first turn. This may or may not be the policy in later games, so, the best thing you can do is gird your loins for combat early on. Even if you intend to remain peaceful, if you would have peace, prepare for war.

All of your characters with Arcane ratings should immediately load their duel and battle spells. Since this does not count against your character action limit it won't get in the way of your other goals. If your minor characters have no duel spells, teach them some early on.

If your intention is to Bless any of your characters for any reason, do it on the first turn. There is usually a 2-3 turn wait before the first production, and as the production turn is when your blessings and other long-duration spells fade, this will ensure maximum usefulness. It will also increase your combat power quite a bit. Remember that Blessings always work off the base value, can never exceed 100% of the base, and must overcome any magic resistance the character has. Therefore a character with a Personal Combat of 10, blessed 100%, needs an 11-point Greater Blessing spell to achieve 20. After the first production that spell will fade by 3 points and the PC in this example will be 17, and since all Blessings work off the base of 10, it would take another 11 points to raise it back to 20 immediately. The best way to work Blessings, if you want to remain continually enhanced, is to let the Blessing fade until you have almost regained your mana points, then do it again. Practicing an attribute seems to work off the enhanced level, though, so if you want to raise your attribute by practice you should let it fall to near its base level.

You should also decide whether you want to be masked or unmasked. Neither status will make any difference as to whether another player knows that your main character is a main character, since all player main characters are in the range 1-200. All player secondary characters are in the range 201-1000, so you can't hide that either. Masking will hide your skills and attributes from a View Character order, and will cover your coat of arms, but it also has one interesting side effect which caused a few problems for some players early on.

Player Registration Sheets

Character #8

Character Name: Don Aldrump Race: Human
Character type (A,B,C,D, or E): E Religion ID#: 2-Raisneah

Characteristic / Attributes	Base value	Ending Rating	Additional cost for for skill increase (+1)	Total point cost
Strength	10	10	1	0
Dexterity	10	10	1	0
Constitution	10	10	1.5	0
Beauty	10	10	1	0
Personal Combat Rating	1	15	1	14
Tactics	0		2	0
Influence	0		3	0

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 14

Skill Name	ID#	Cost Rating 1	Cost for +1 Increase	End Rating	Total Point Cost
MERCHANT	16	3	2	16	33
ENCHANTER	8	10	1	24	33

CHARACTER POINT SUB TOTAL: 66
TOTAL CHARACTER POINTS: 80

If a location has any prohibitions to entry, e.g. no illusionists allowed in, nor Maratzen allowed in, and the character attempting to get in is masked, the location or guild will not let the character in regardless because they cannot view the character and so they prohibit his or her entry out of hand. Of course, if you have enough Stealth you can get in anyway, but most characters will have to unmask to get into major locations, for most major locations will have at least one prohibition.

If you are a particularly outgoing player you might even want to place your name, address and phone number in your location message or one of your character messages. A narrower focus might be obtained by placing your phone number only, and perhaps placing it into a guild message board to target certain player types. The message systems within Legends are one of the nicest things about it. If you can, you should have at least one character with Rumormonger skill so that you don't have to waste valuable character actions placing messages.

Don't forget to assign a leader to your forces. If you want a Ranger map, you have to assign that Ranger to slot #9 which is the overall force commander slot. This goes for your locations too, since no battle benefit will apply if the general is fighting on the front lines. If that commander leaves the force later, you must still reassign a new leader. Nothing is automatic. Make sure you set your loss percentage too, since a starting force with 0% losses set will automatically run from any force

that does not rout on the first round of combat. Even if you don't want any knock-down drag-outs early on, 5% or 10% is a good setting.

For the Overlord and Mercenary types, create several forces and assign 1 mounted soldier and several food units each. Send them out in all directions, as it is vitally important that you find out what is around you. If you have any Ranger characters, send them out as well, preferably alone. The spotting modifiers for Rangers, alone, especially in rough terrain, will make it unlikely that anyone will see you anyway, so this is not that much of a risk.

Overlords and Mercenaries should begin setting goals for themselves immediately. Do you want to begin building ships on a regular basis? Train those shipbuilders with your free crowns, and start harvesting lumber, gathering soft materials and byproducts. Do you want to build an inn right off the bat? Mine and gather the requisite materials for that. You won't be able to do it all, so concentrate on one thing at a time.

Overlords and Mercenaries, unless they desire to conquer something immediately, should establish a training camp right away. If you want to take a little risk, establish it outside the walls of your town or castle, since training armies in the field is more effective than training them in garrison. If you want to play it safe, stay inside the walls, but start right away. In Legends, as in real life, proper training will often beat numerical

superiority.

COMING UP NEXT


As of this writing (late April 1990) the third turn of Legends I (Crown of Avalon) has been processed, along with the first production turn. Small errors in programming are being fixed as they crop up, and the turn sheets are undergoing modification for better player use. This "pay to playtest" is not as odious as it sounds, for nearly all of the errors have been somehow in favor of the player, and the player usually gets to keep some part of the "bonus" it he or she calls the gamemasters' attention to it. For example, one player was shorted on lumber production so some of his build orders did not go through because of a program bug. Now he not only has the lost production back and all results of his original actions corrected, but an increased lumber rating as well. In a game as complex as this one no amount of controlled playtesting will turn up all of the loopholes interested players will find.

Legends I can still be joined on the standby list. As players drop out, new positions are being set up. You can not take over a position from another player, but must set up a brand new one. If you want to get in on the ground floor, and play with some of the highest-quality players around (from all of the established players in Midnight's earlier games), and don't mind the wait, ask to get on the list for game I. Game II has processed its second turn and is also full with a waiting list, although probably a shorter one than game I. Game II has lots of newer players, and many who heard about Legends later than the game I players. At first Game II was closed to players already have a setup in Game I but as Game II did not quite fill up it was opened to Game I players too. There are quite a few players in Game II from Game I who intend to play a looser, feer, riskier game with what they learn about the play of the two games complementing each other.

Game III is in the process of filling up as of this writing, with those who are unwilling to wait on a list getting in. All three games use similar Crown of Avalon modules, with the major characters and locations differing slightly to moderately in location and character, and all of the minor locations and characters completely randomized, to ensure that players of multiple games will not gain large advantages from specific knowledge.

If you want to join one of these games, send \$15.00 for the four rulebooks and setup to Midnight Games, 130 E. Main, Suite 305 Medford OR 97501. If you are not sure about laying out the money, there is a free information flyer available, just write them or call (503) 772-7872 between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

The next and final article in this series will cover the play of the game up to the date it is written, giving some inside hints and methods of maximizing your play.



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LEGENDS - THE CROWN OF AVALON

A FIRST IMPRESSION

By Steve Simmons

The LEGENDS game system and its first game module, The Crown of Avalon, were released by Midnight Games in October 1989. Midnight Games is currently planning two parallel Crown of Avalon campaigns which are called (no surprises here) Game 1 and Game 2. Players who filled in the startup forms and returned them by the requested date of 1 DEC 89 should have received their starting positions by 31 JAN 90, if in Game 1, and by 10 FEB 90 if in Game 2. The first turn in Game 1 is scheduled by February 1990 and for March 1990 in Game 2.

BASIC NATURE

Legends is a Power Game. Its technological level is medieval. It includes many aspects of Fantasy Role Playing (FRP). Those whose primary interest is Power Gaming should find Legends of great interest. Those whose primary interest is FRP are likely to also find Legends of interest, so long as they accept that the basic nature of Legends is Power Gaming.

RULES

The rules are contained in four separate volumes, two large and two small. While well written, the rules are not easily understood due to: 1) their number (great), 2) their complexity (high), and 3) the interactions of various rules (frequent). Several thorough readings of the rules may suffice to overcome their number and complexity, but understanding how the rules interact is likely to come only through experience.

The massive amount of data presented in the rules places a premium on its organization. Organization is good in some respects, but poor in others. Most frequently used data is presented tabularly, which makes for easy referencing. However, answering even basic questions, such as "What items my character may carry?", requires referencing different tables in various sections of the rules. Legends would greatly benefit from a fifth rules volume, a booklet containing the tables from the other four.

The rules are complete in the sense that players are told everything they need to correctly fill-in their turnsheets. The rules describe, at a general level, the various actions that players may undertake. For example, the rules describe exactly how diplomacy with NPCs is done but gives only a general idea of the factors that determine whether diplomacy is successful or not. The rules omit any formulas used to determine success or failure. Players are left to determine this based on experience.

The cost for the rules is \$15.00. This includes processing a player's filled-in set-up sheets and returning the player's Starting Position to him/her.

URNS AND TURNSHEETS

Legends is designed to support two normal turns per month and one production turn a month, which is automatically included in the second turn each month. Legends offers three types of turnsheets: Individual (\$4.50), Realm (\$7.50), and Kingdom (\$13.00). The only difference between them is the number of orders and the cost. A normal turn consists of submitting one and only one of these turnsheets. This limit of one is important as it prevents players, with more money to spend, from gaining an advantage by submitting multiple turn sheets. Since there are two turns per month, cost will be a minimum of \$9.00 per month to a maximum of \$26.00.

Production occurs automatically (i.e. without submitting orders) as a part of the second turn in every month. What is produced depends upon what tasks the player has assigned to his/her population. These task assignments can be changed by submitting a fourth type of turnsheet, the Production Turnsheet. It can be submitted at any time. However, production occurs whether or not a Production Turnsheet is submitted. If you are pleased with what your population is producing, you can continue producing indefinitely without ever submitting a Production Turnsheet. Each Production Turnsheet submitted costs \$1.50. This is over and above the costs described in the preceding paragraph. If you plan well, I anticipate the number of Production Turnsheets submitted should be no more than 3 or 4 a year.

Legends also allows Special Actions Turnsheets for the purpose of negotiating with certain high ranking NPCs. The cost for one Special Action Turnsheet (four special actions) is \$2.00. This is in addition to the costs described above. How often Special Actions will be used, I do not yet know as the game has just begun.

PLAYER DIPLOMACY

This is a Power Game. Player-to-player will be essential. If you do not like doing a lot of diplomacy, this game is probably not for you. A player can enjoy exploring the myths, legends, and magic of Legends without much diplomacy, but winning will require diplomacy since victory is by faction (up to 25 players) and individual victories are impossible. Factions and victory are further described later in this article.

Since the game has just begun, it is difficult to predict the requirements of player-to-player diplomacy. However, I expect that most can be done by mail. The only exception to this is likely to be combat involving a multi-player alliance. Coordinating military plans within the half-month turnaround time is likely to require phone calls.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Each player is represented in Legends by a single

Main Character. A Main Character and all other characters possess: Characteristics, Attributes, and Skills. Characteristics include Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, and Beauty. Attributes include a Personal Combat Rating, a Tactical Rating (ability to lead soldiers), and a Diplomatic Rating (ability to influence other characters.) There are 18 skills ranging from a variety of magical skills (wizard, necromancer, etc.) to Administrator/Engineer to Berserker.

Main Characters select their race. Races allowed include humans, orcs, dwarves, elves, giants, maratsen (lion-men), and other fantasy races. A Main Character's race determines his starting Characteristics, as well as the races of the secondary characters and any population that the Main Character controls at the beginning of the game.

Main Characters can control other characters, locations (Villages, Towns, Castles, Cities, etc), population (soldiers, farmers, artisans), and items (gold, weapons, armor, mounts, etc.). How much of each a player begins with depends upon what type of Main Character is chosen. Those who choose a Heroic Main Character get 80 "set-up" points to increase their Main Characters' Characteristics and Attributes as well as acquiring Skills and 30 points for a single secondary character. Heroic Main Characters also begin with the best quality items and seem to have better chances of beginning with magical items.

Adventurer Main Characters get 60 set-up points themselves, and five secondary characters (two with 30 points and three with 20). Their items seem to be almost as good as those of Heroic Main Characters. Mercenary Main Characters get 60 set-up points themselves, and three secondary characters (one with 30 points and two with 20). They also begin the game in control of a castle (effectively a strongly fortified village) with a non-soldier population of 80, if Giants, up to 400, if Human. Mercenaries also get soldiers amounting to roughly 20% of their non-soldier population. Their items are distinctly poorer than those of either a Heroic or Adventurer Main Character.

Overlord Main Characters get 40 set-up points themselves, and five secondary characters (two with 30 points and three with 20.) They control a modestly fortified town with a non-soldier population of 200, if Giants, up to 1,000 if Human. They have soldiers amounting to roughly 5% of their non-soldier population and their items are the poorest of all.

Crown of Avalon has been populated with over 1,000 non-player characters (NPCs). They are identical to main and secondary characters except that their Characteristics, Attributes, and Skills are chosen by the Gamemasters and not by players.

NPCs appear to have two major roles in Legends. First, every non-player location or military force will be led by at least one character. This allows player characters (either main or secondary) to interact successfully with these non-player locations/forces by successfully influencing their leading characters. Second, these NPCs can also be recruited into a player's control as secondary characters. Successfully interacting with NPCs, in either case, appears to depend primarily on the player character's Diplomatic Rating.

Legends is a new game and the majority of its rules are new. However, Legends builds upon the already highly successful EPIC games system, also a product of Midnight Games. This fact offers Legends players a considerable advantage (one that's unusual for a new game) in that many of the basic rules (movement, population, food, etc.) have been carried forward from Epic into Legends. These rules work and work well as anyone who has played Epic will realize. Thus, many of the basic rules of Legends have already been playtested and thoroughly debugged.

Legends has made several important changes to these basic rules carried forward from Epic. Most important, in my opinion, is the greater flexibility given to players in how they assign population. Epic permanently separated population into a two basic categories (General and Soldiers). The growth of each depended solely on the size of the General Population. Unfortunately, this made it impossible for players to increase the number of soldiers by reducing the number of farmers or other such trade-offs.

To me, being able to trade-off soldiers for farmers and farmers for artisans, etc. is one of the most enjoyable parts of a game. It allows me to choose a military strategy (emphasize soldiers), a growth strategy (emphasize farmers), an economic strategy (emphasize artisan), or whatever combination of the three I think best. This change, in and of itself, makes Legends a far more subtle and interesting game than Epic.

The second major change to the basic, borrowed from Epic rules, is the ability of multiple players to contribute to a single military force. Epic prohibited this. Alliances were reduced to "You attack VICTIM A and I attack VICTIM A at the same time." Legends alliances allow multiplayer Forces. This allows joint military campaigns to be planned and carried out, fortified cities (whose defenses are well beyond the capabilities of any single player) to be successfully taken, and generally rewards a well-coordinated alliance over a poorly-coordinated one.

VICTORY AND FACTIONS

As noted above, most of Legends is new and it is this portion that gives Legends its unique flavor. In Legends, victory is determined by faction; i.e. players cannot win individual victories but win if and only if their faction wins. Players may choose their faction at any time, but once made, the choice of faction is permanent. Factions consist of up to 25 players, with the top five players in each fac-

tion serving as that faction's leaders.

Legends also includes numerous FRP elements. Each Legends game includes some number of legends. For the Crown of Avalon, there are 50 legends per game. Unravelling legends is essential to victory for all factions. If I understand it correctly, every faction has a list of things that it must find and possess in order to win. Each legend provides a set of clues that ultimately lead to one or more of these "victory conditions". Following a legend's worth of clues is likely to be a dangerous business as clues seem to lead from one hazard to another.

Another FRP element included in Legends is monsters. Most monsters occupy lairs. Of these, many gather treasures which are stored in their lairs. Some Monsters have chosen sites of intrinsic value (such as a mithril mine) as their lairs. Presumably, some of the toughest monsters guard lairs containing clues of the 50 legends that lead to "victory conditions".

MAGIC

Magic plays a large role in Legends. Characters (and a few monsters) can acquire magical skills. There are nine magical skills available: Wizard, Sorcerer, Illusionist, Necromancer, Summoner, Seer, Warlock, Enchanter, and Druid. Each has its own set of spells. However, it is fairly easy for a magic-using character to learn spells outside his/her own specialty.

Magic is also a strong point of Legends. Midnight Games has obviously spent much time play-balancing magic. They have done this in two ways. First is spell points. Not only are spell points limited but, once used, spell point recovery is limited, on the average to only 4 spell points per month. This allows a mage to cast one or two minor spells a month and keep up to full strength. However, the effects of most minor spells are small and in many cases can be duplicated by non-

magical means.

Major magical spells can have profound effects such as earthquakes, moving entire cities, converting characters into vampyres, etc. These spells take from 20 to 50 spell points. Thus, a mage who casts such a spell will need several months or even a year to regain full strength.

The second restraint on magic is the spell list. Spells are powerful, they can give victory in battle to a far weaker army, cause plagues and famines, destroy walls around cities, and even kill characters (including Main Characters). However, the spell list provides defenses against all powerful magics. Those who do not develop their anti-magic defenses have only themselves to blame if they fall victim to magic.

Midnight Games has also calibrated Legends' powerful magics such that victory (which is by faction) cannot be altered by a single powerful spell. There is no single spell that allows a "victory condition" to be stolen from one faction to another. This does not mean that magic is not important. Indeed proper use of magic throughout the game to further one's plans, not waiting to the end of the game and gaining victory by the casting of omnipotent spells.

THE MODERATORS

The moderators at Midnight Games are first class. They are at work from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (West Coast Time) six days a week. When I have called or written with questions, the answers have been complete, clear, and prompt. The two problems I have encountered have been resolved equally well. They checked my orders sheet, by hand, and corrected two miswritten orders so that they could be successfully processed and not rejected. They even dug through their stack of orders to find mine, so that I could correct, by phone, a disastrous order, which I issued due to my misunderstanding of the rules.

LEGENDS GAMESYSTEM CROWN OF AVALON GAME MODULE

MIDNIGHT GAMES
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RULES (includes set-up Turn):	\$15.00
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REALM TURN:	\$7.50
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PRODUCTION TURNSHEET:	\$1.50
SPECIAL ACTION TURNSHEET:	\$2.00

Profile of Reviewer: Steve Simmons
Previously Published Articles: None in Paper Mayhem,
Various Articles in: The Avalon Hill General
The Third Reich Player's Handbook
Campaigner's Notes
The Postal Warrior

Favorite Game Genre: Miniatures
Favorite Game: WRG 7th Edition (Ancient Miniatures)
Preferred PBM Game: Aegyptus
Preferred Complexity: Difficult
Preferred Length: Open-ended
Diplomacy Preferred: 4 to 5 communications per Turn

SOVEREIGNTY REVIEW

By Michael Leisenring

Been searching for a game that provides for lively military interaction on a Grand Global scale? How about a simulation with numerous variables, which provide infinite diplomatic possibilities, for the creative armchair statesman? Or maybe you fancy yourself as a shrewd trader and economic miracle worker. There is a place for you!!! I'll try to give you a clearer vision of what to me is, the BEST DAMN GAME I've ever played! PERIOD! A PBM Simulation that encompasses the triad of true gaming excitement. Military, Economic and Diplomatic! I hope I explain it well enough to have you join us in game of: SOVEREIGNTY a Contemporary Geo-Political Confrontation.

SOVEREIGNTY is a game in which there are 16 geo-Political "regions" of the world each controlled by a Player. Some regions consist of just one nation such as China. Other regions may be made up by several different nations, (i.e.: Marxist 3rd World has Cuba, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Angola, Vietnam, etc.) This can present an amazing amount of interaction with numerous players on every possible edge of the map. The effect is almost geometric, with the infinite possibilities that arise especially when you begin to figure the entire playership into the equation, whether it be military, trade or economic decision to be made. The nice part about this game is that you can choose from a variety of types and sizes of regions to suit your personal time constraints or mental state. (ie: USA Superpower/OR Marxist 3rd World/the harasser with guerilla units against most every region). Your region will be either Capitalist Core West, Communist Core East or Developing Non Aligned. Each of these designations put some restrictions on allowable actions between members of differing political orientation (ie: East & West can't sell weapons or share bases).

There is NO gamemaster in SOVEREIGNTY. NO TURN FEES. Your expense beyond the cost of the game is for your monthly mailings to the playership, sometimes twice monthly if things get dicey. The game is supervised by game members elected to the following positions. Marshall (keeps track of Postmarks and reports results of elections, UN Votes); The Tribunes (3 Players who decide on rules disputes between the playership); Historian (reports results of all combat). The legal mechanism of the game is sufficient to settle any disputes and set precedents to be followed.

The map provided with the game is today's world as we know it, with sea zones, continents and nations divided into provinces on land, each with it's own point value, yearly trade good production and other potential assets. (ie Industrial Centers, Nuclear reactors, Base, Port, Capital). All of which can be increased for your benefit, through good

play, or decreased to your detriment, by poor play or the actions of an adversary.

The rulebook is 100 pages. Wait! I now, 100 pages!? Don't worry, like any game of this genre there is a need on the part of the designers to cover the many possibilities which inevitably arise. They do this very thoroughly through frequent examples. There are also tables and sample "Acts" (your monthly move) so one may be able to with a quick reference, find the applicable section needed. My only suggestion here would be for an index, as some situations that present themselves may be covered in several different sections of the rules.

Now, let's get on to the nuts and bolts of the game. I'll start with the military aspects. As a region you have a wide choice of military units available. Naval (major warships, minor warships, carriers, subs, amphib transports), Airforce (TAC air, Strategic Bombers, Missiles, bases); and Ground forces (inf, mech inf, armour, airmobile, artillery, airborne, HQ).

Air units are EXTREMELY important. Should you lose air superiority or at least the ability to resist air attacks (with missiles) your ground army or navy will be in big trouble.

Your first military decisions involve setting up your region start up units and bases with an eye towards future strategy. Bases are pretty handy and important, because they are the only places from which air units may attack or defend. Bases also have a unique TRANSPORT capability allowing a limited number of military and/or missile units to TRANSPORT to another base (yours or an ally) on the other side of the world, in a fraction of the normal movement time. Therefore, all military deployments and movements are closely scrutinized by the Playership searching for any hidden meanings to be divined from the combined disposition of potential adversaries. But beware, you may misread and by overreaction bring on exactly the fate you had hoped to prevent. The military balance of power in SOVEREIGNTY is ever so fragile.

Combat is the most unique factor in SOVEREIGNTY. Each unit has a specific combat factor and capability depending on terrain, seasons, etc. and the situation. Battles are fought in a series of rounds, depending on location of the battle (season, land, port). Each round battle involves separate types of units. For instance, in a land battle, air, missile, and bases fire in Round 1. All losses are subtracted simultaneously BEFORE you move on to Round 2, where ground units remaining battle. The more varied the types of combat units involved the more intriguing the results. To succeed militarily in SOVEREIGNTY not only do you need luck, cunning and guile but you MUST employ the concept of combined arms

or you're guaranteed failure.

Battle is resolved utilizing a formula provided in the rules and reported by the Historian each month. The first three months of the game, peace is imposed on the playership. This allows everyone the opportunity to form alliances and begin a basic military strategy before all hell breaks loose. And trust me, it will! With sixteen players it's inevitable someone's going to be moving to expand his/her region's power and influence. And, there are incentives to encourage those who want to be on top, but more on that under diplomatic and economic aspects of SOVEREIGNTY. In game one (where WW III currently rages) we had 23 battles in the FIRST MONTH battle was allowed. We had battles involving Player vs. Player and some battles being the absorption of one of the many neutrals scattered around the globe, with all their enticing trade goods and industrial centers. The neutrals won't roll over and die though, some come equipped with a formidable military force that can be

Domination



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regenerated should you miscalculate or misjudge a rival's intentions. Foreign intervention vs. your bangin' on a neutral can be devastating.

Chemical and Nuclear weapons also play a role in SOVEREIGNTY with the anticipated results. Chemical weapons can be used against military targets (great against airmobile, inf) or civilian targets, by reducing effects. Nuclear weapons very simply wipe out everything in the target province or sea zone. We've had their exchange already, bombing the USSR, USA and Western Europe back into the third world, but you don't hear S. America, Leftist Africa or any of the other smaller regions genuinely complaining about this sudden reduction in the superpowers influence, they see lots of potential for gain.

Nukes haven't always been the weapon of the last resort. Instead, they have been used pre-emptively. Proof positive of the need to measure your words and actions carefully in SOVEREIGNTY.

Economics is the foundation of your region, and heavily influences your ability to achieve anything militarily or diplomatically. The economic basics are the following:

1) **TAXATION:** every April 10% of regions total Province Point value added as cash to treasury.

2) **TRADE GOODS:** each Province can produce anywhere from zero to 3 goods each Oct. These goods can then be used in a variety of ways.

a) **Markets:** a collection of goods in Apr. or Oct. to raise working capital and to increase your tax base (province value).

b) **Created trade goods:** (ie. ferrous ore can be used to Produce 4 steel, 1 education produces 2 technology etc.).

c) **High Tech Military:** using above created goods is to produce specialized military units (bases, air, ships, armour etc...)

3) **ECONOMIC POINTS:** accumulated for percentage of total economic gain for your region Oct. to Oct. and added as cash to your treasury.

4) **NATIONALISM POINTS:** accumulated for the successful conquest of neutral or adversarial provinces, with bonus points for taking an area of historical importance to your region. (ie. Arabs take Israel Nicaraguan rebels take Nicaragua etc.) Added as cash to your treasury. There are many natural conflicts at the start of the game, with many regions possessing guerilla units which can be used only against a specific region. They have a tendency to really get the negotiations rollin'!

Diplomacy is the final part of the triad that makes SOVEREIGNTY complete. It is imperative for each player to become active from the beginning to ensure that your point of view is heard. Should you be erratic or remain silent too long, you may be surprised by how many regions don't give a damn about someone attacking you. They probably have their own problems or other interests, to the point that if you haven't made yourself important to them, you may be out in the cold. Diplomatic initiatives are very important in getting the trade goods you need. Industrialized nations need raw materials and energy, for Industrial Centers.

Radical Arabs, Central America & Moderate Arabs have the oil. Many regions NEED gold and gems for markets. Africa has 'em. These types of needs create a large number of diplomatic opportunities, but be quick someone else may well have offered a better deal. Everytime I talk to a new player of SOVEREIGNTY they'd say, "how much is a technology, or gold etc. WORTH". There are no set values. It's whatever the market will bear. Capitalism at it's finest! But there are those times, when you wanna grease the skids, with a better deal for a friend. On the other hand, being able to estimate another's need for trade goods can bring you a much higher value than you ever imagined. While values may vary, you should never, unless going to war, renege on a deal. That will come back to haunt, especially if made public.

Diplomacy involving military decisions is also very active. There are a variety of decision you MUST make.

1) **Defensive Alliances:** combines your military force with your ally in whatever provinces or sea zones named. However, this can get you into situations that you had no intention of becoming involved with. I would suggest careful negotiations as to what an ally can expect from you.

2) **Joint Commands:** military combinations for offensive actions.

3) **Base Access:** you can allow others to move into your bases or vice versa, but be sure any movements are usually met in kind.

4) **Guerrillas:** several regions have units which can be used exclusively against your region. Should you possess these units they are a bargaining chip, but can also invite disaster.

5) **Neutrals:** there are a number of neutral nations. Many produce very valuable goods or have other important assets (Ind. Ctrs. etc.) which more than one region may have their eye on. Negotiations to determine who gets what seem to progress fairly easily, but every once in a while someone just seems to disagree and then the fun begins. But I wax militarily.

The diplomatic opportunities go further, to shared Industrial use, Nuclear disarmament etc. It can be quite overwhelming. Again, the "geometric" nature of SOVEREIGNTY reveals itself. The maneuvering and constantly changing or very muddled alliances keep you constantly wondering; "what IS so and so's disposition if such and such happens". It's enough to drive us Paranoid Schizophrenics crazy!

Creativity is essential because there are always others offering another deal. Keep an open mind!

I hope I've helped you get a better understanding of what SOVEREIGNTY entails. It is an incredible game which fills a need I had always searched for. Global, diplomatic, military, economic, current history excitement! If you've got Grande Huevos come join us!



SOVEREIGNTY™

A GAME OF CONTEMPORARY
GEOPOLITICAL CONFRONTATIONS



In this game of military, economic, and political intrigue, you are the leader of a Region in today's world. As leader you will attempt to secure your Region's objectives in the ever-changing international arena utilizing a host of military and economic options. The game features:

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* **NO TURN FEES** are paid since each player mails his monthly turns directly to all other players in the game. Inherent in the game is a unique self-policing system which provides for elected positions and enables the players themselves to perform the tasks normally handled by a moderator.

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THE STRATEGIST'S QUESTIONS

By Todd A. Travis

Upon entering any PBM game, one quickly realized that you-the player is competing economically, politically and militarily for resources and objectives. With that in mind, I've always had a fascination of 'war doctrines' and essays that outline 'fundamentals' of war.

What I propose to do is to outline some of the questions history suggests that strategists must ask before they commence a war, or before they take actions which might lead to war, or before they undertake a wartime campaign, or before they end a war in which they are already engaged. I shall specify five such questions, with several variations on each, with credit given to the Air War College, Phase I, Military Strategy 1982-83 for the initial five. The number is arbitrary and could no doubt be easily expanded, though perhaps not so easily contracted. All of these questions are suggested by the history of war and diplomacy in the Western world over the past century and a half.

The first and most fundamental question to be asked of any prospective war or other military action is: "What is it about?" What specific interests and policy objectives are to be served by the proposed military action? How great is the value attached to those interests and objectives, and what is their fair price?

It is of course, to the great German strategist, Carl von Clausewitz, that we owe the first precise formulation of the concept that lies behind this question. "War is no pastime," wrote Clausewitz, "it is a serious means to a serious end...War...is an act of policy...War...is a continuation of political activity by other means...The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it...War should never be thought of as something autonomous but always as an instrument of policy...War is simply a continuation of political intercourse, with the addition of other means...Its grammar, indeed, may be its own, but not its logic..."

So when the possibility of war presents itself, players must ask themselves, "What specific policy objectives will be served by going to war, what specific interests require these objectives to be pursued, and are these objectives and interests worth the price that war more often than not demands?"

I have said that players must ask this question. A more appropriate word would be "should". Because more often they don't, and when they don't the end results can be disastrous. Players often lack the foresight to analyze the costs and benefits of the war on which they so blithely embark. They neglect seriously to ask fundamental questions "What is the objective? Is it worth it? Can it be achieved via diplomacy or economic means rather than war?"

The second question for strategists concerns not the decision to go to war, but the proper method of fighting the war once it starts. Assuming that

a player at war has some rational objectives, the next question is: "Is the player's military strategy tailored to meet the player's political objectives?" What this question suggests is that there be a close correlation between the political ends of war and the military means employed to achieve those ends.

One of the great masters at achieving such correlation was certainly Count Otto von Bismarck. Take the Austro-Prussian war as a case in point. Bismarck's purpose in provoking a war with Austria was to consolidate the many separate sovereign states of Germany into one empire under Prussian domination. To do this Austria's ancient pretensions to leadership among the German-speaking peoples had to be eliminated. One decisive military defeat would be enough to lower Austrian prestige to the point where Prussia could easily establish her preeminence. And when in fact the Prussians did soundly beat the Austrian army at Koniggratz, Bismarck simply called off the war. The Prussian generals wanted to follow up their victory, march on Vienna, and humiliate the Austrians and their Emperor, but Bismarck vetoed the proposal for the simple reason that it was redundant. The object of the war had been achieved, and

it was now more useful to cultivate Austrian good will than to prolong hostilities. Bismarck realized full well that today's enemies can become tomorrow's friends, and vice versa.

A third and most difficult question that strategists must ask is: "What are the limits of military power?" There are many things that armadas and armed forces, no matter how powerful, cannot do. Field Marshal Montgomery once said that "the first principle of war is not to try to walk to Moscow". Napoleon and Hitler both tried--and couldn't. They miscalculated the terrain, the weather, and the will of the Russian people. So the first requirement for answering this question is a careful calculation of one's own resources, including those of one's allies, and of the resources of the enemy and his allies. Accuracy in these matters is hard to come by and the chances of error are great. Simple prudence therefore is the watchword.

But even beyond the demands of prudent calculation, wise strategists will recognize that there are limits to what mere military force can accomplish. The object of war, said Clausewitz, is "to impose our will on the enemy" and physical force is the

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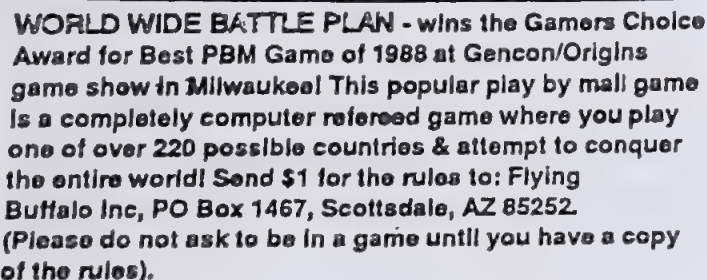
Question number four is simple: "What are the alternatives?" What are the alternatives to war? What are the alternative campaign strategies, especially if the preferred one fails? How is the war to be terminated gracefully if the odds against victory become too high?

tions, precise blueprints are drawn up, stipulating in detail the location, movement, and preferred course of action for vast numbers of resources and supplies. What happens then if events unroll differently than expected? The wise strategist will of course have prepared contingency plans. But even these may not exactly suit the case. Here, as Clausewitz says, is where genius may enter the picture. The really superior strategist will above all else be flexible, will adapt quickly to changed circumstances, will turn chance or even misfortune to his own advantage.

Generals and admirals are constantly being accused of fighting the last war or of preparing to fight the war just finished. And sometimes the accusation is just. Just look briefly at the French Army of 1914-1915. Dazzled by the quick success that had attended German operations in the Franco-Prussian War, the French General Staff had become infatuated with the "principle" of the offensive. Their simple theory of combat for military success was "Attack, Attack, Attack!". What they overlooked of course was the machine gun. And

Most of the mistakes that I have recounted here have been, at root, failures of the imagination, failures of the intellect. The strategic problem is essentially an intellectual problem. And before it can be addressed, it must be defined. And to define the problem, one starts with questions: What is the object? What are the means to achieve it? Are they available? What are the costs? The benefits? What are the hazards? What are the limitations? What are the lessons from experience? How does the present differ from the past?

And one final warning to all you strategic planners. After all your plans have been perfected, all avenues explored, all contingencies thought through, then ask yourself one final question: "What have I overlooked?" Then say your prayers and go to sleep—with the certain knowledge that tomorrow too will bring its share of nasty surprises.



PBM ACTIVITY CORNER

ADVENT GAMES

Advent Games would like to announce the winners of our first TAKAMO II game (JORA):

- 1st place: VALJEAN alias Jim Frediani
- 2nd place: OVERLORD alias Todd Bair
- 3rd place: SINN FEIN alias Jim Arnold

All three received free game credit.
CONGRATULATIONS!!

ADVANCED GAMING ENTERPRISES

CRACK OF DOOM

Fighting continued on the island of Mycenea as the Blackthornes (Lawful Humans) attempted to attack the Chaotic settlement being developed and to destroy the construction crew. The attack was intercepted by the 2nd LOOT Legion (LOOT Trolls). Despite a frenzied battle, the Trolls were beaten and forced to withdraw-but for now the settlement was saved.

At the city of Altheria the First Legion (neutral Humans) prepared to launch a massive attack on the Grey Robesmen, apparently in retaliation for their attack on an army of Halfings and in support of the EGA/DOA war effort, but were intercepted by the East-mark Eored (CSA Humans). In a close and bloody battle the First Legion was victorious though both armies suffered heavy losses.

A large number of additional battles in the war between the EGA/DOA coalition and the CSA also occurred near the city of Hampton. In a confused series of battles with a variety of CSA forces a L.A.F.A.C.S. alliance battle group emerged victorious.

CTF 2187

Game #54: Turn #9 saw little change in the comparative ratings as both teams continue to battle it out. Everyone seems to be converging toward the map's center in preparation for the final showdown. At least two of the remaining Bots (three have already been destroyed) may not survive to see the game's conclusion. The best Bot Victory Rating is 4.92.

Game #56: Turn #7 saw Side #1's hopes for an upset brutally dashed as Side #2 was able to greatly expand their lead. There now seems to be little hope for Side #1 to take over the lead. Things are not all grim for Side #1, however, as this turn they scored the game's first CP Kill as Cadet Nimrod was able to put the final touches on Command Post #2. In addition they may be able to destroy, or force to eject, another veteran Pilot from Side #2. Of course they may lose two Bots of their own next turn. What a fight! The best Bot Victory Rating is 4.76.

Game #60: Turn #5 saw Side #1 continue to expand their lead despite increasingly determined resistance from Side #2. Side #2 is scoring well against the enemy Command Post but, like everywhere else, is taking a beating from the return fire. Both teams have largely dug in and are simply exchanging blows with little effort to maneuver. We may begin to see some casualties starting next turn. The best Bot Victory Rating is 3.16.

BATTLE-MAGIC GAMING

ATLANTRIX

Obituaries - Anthalas, 305, killed Sarderth, #173, on block 10 just outside the Constables Station to earn his 2nd Star in a death challenge.

Fiona Wayness, #362, killed Gnik, #013, in a death match in the city stadium as both sought to graduate from Gladiator school. This contest earned Fiona her 2nd Star.

Comito, High Priest of the Temple of Mystic Good, died of heart failure in his study after working an especially trying spell for Buchanan, #378, a junior priest of the temple.

Jemina, #302, and Sky, #162, announce that a son was born to them. He shall be called Dragor and had services held for him at the City Temple in March.

Moonshadow, #304, is being sought in connection with a devastating bar-room brawl that recently occurred in the Full Moon Tavern. Anyone with information on his whereabouts should contact the constables or the owner of the Full Moon Tavern.

The outside of the Temple of Mystic Good was recently seen covered with Graffiti and symbols of the Sea God Temple. Priests of the Sea God temple disclaim any knowledge of the acts and said 'It's probably those City Temple Slime again, trying to restart trouble between us the Mystic Goodies.'

INTO INFINITY

Master Race News

Qua conquered all 4 Bilon colonies in an outlying star system in one Blitzkrieg strike.

The Bilons reenforced their attack on the Qua HSS, managed to destroy all defenses there and fire a Super Missile causing the Qua HSS sun to go Super Nova.
Alpha News

Floribundus is the first empire in the game to have MAIN fleets operating in THREE different galaxies at the same time.

Beta News

House Atreides conquered a Shiek colony in the Shiek HSS. They again attacked the Shiek HW and again bounced off it's heavy defenses.

The Reich destroyed a large House Atreides colony. Valkyrian attacked and destroyed a large Gold Dragon "T" colony.

Valkyrian attacked a Dark Lords system, destroyed a Dark Lords Mining fleet there and went on to conquer a large "T" colony there.

With one massive effort House Atreides managed to finally conquer the Shiek HW.

Gamma News

Someone bombed the Aslan HSS with a new type of "Warp" Missile.

A Heechee fleet used RFRO to react into a colony attacked by Otteran. While getting there too late to save the colony, they gave the Otteran fleet a severe mauling in reprisal for the attack. It seems that a battle of the Triax Alliance vs the Morgalian Federation is shaping up here.

Aslan attacked and destroyed 4 medium sized Prophets of Enlightenment colonies in reprisal for the earlier attack.

Aslan attacked a Prophet's of Enlightenment "T" colony and got their entire landing force eliminated for the effort.

PE (Prophets of Enlightenment) attacked the Aslan

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BATTLE-MAGIC GAMING

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HSS, blew their way through to the HW and attacked and captured it after defeating heavy defenses. PE took major fleet losses in this effort.

Epsilon News

Aragorn blew away a large colony in the Mangar HSS. Sloegin blew away a small colony in the Mangar HSS. Sloegin, Aragorn, & PPJR blew away the Mangar HW in a combined attack. Heavy Krondar surface missiles annihilated a PPJR fleet attacking a Krondar colony. Hell empire (from Gamma) attacked and blew away a medium sized PPJR colony in Epsilon.

Zeta News

Seeing defeat looming, Brandau got the aid of Aquilian and Death. All joined forces to combat the feared UFS menace. Jointly they managed to drive the UFS fleets away and destroy 3 colonies while bouncing off another's defenses.

Death has finally tracked down the last fleet of his ancient Jihad enemy The Bjorgian. Time will tell if he can destroy them before they flee again.

Kappa News

Apple again hit the Diplomatic Marauders HSS, this time to find a Phoenix Eye fleet had wandered in. By using "Attack ALL" orders they were able to engage the Phoenix fleet in lieu of blowing away the DM defenses by themselves. This battle still rages.

Barboskus Presidium attacked the APriori HSS. A fierce battle rages as they try to blow through fleets and defenses there.

Lambda News

A Hazaran fleet attacked a larger Scraper's Home fleet, coming out on the short end of the battle by losing all up to their starship.

CLEMENS & ASSOCIATES INC

CELESTREK II

The Ratavia has been sitting patiently for help to arrive. There had been an explosion in the power generating pod which had claimed the lives of three crewmen and destroyed the pod. With their last reserves of power they had sent a message to their alliance requesting aid. When a gleaming silver ship was sighted they were overjoyed. Then the ship got close enough to identify: The Silver Stallion. That was not one of their ships. The Silver Stallion stopped, turned, and let loose a barrage of nuclear missiles. The entire starboard side of the Ratavia disappeared. As the Ratavia broke apart the Silver Stallion moved in to search the debris. Two weeks later the Silver Stallion was still at the site, sifting through the wreckage for the last bit of booty. The bulk of the crew was out in E.V.'s among the debris when the alarm sounded. Perhaps this was the rescue ship sent to help the Ratavia. Before the Silver Stallion could get to their battle stations the first missiles from the Nomed Relik began exploding in their midst. They never had a chance. Salvo after salvo racked the now helpless Stallion. By the final phase of the battle there were few pieces left and the commander fled in his escape pod. Now the site is being picked clean by the crew of the Nomed Relik.

UNIVERSE II

QUADRANT XXI:

At the far edge of the quadrant the patrol from the Wanderers Alliance was moving cautiously. Their charts did not cover this area and it would be embarrassing to

stumble into a black hole and spend the next six months trying to get back up here. There scanners had not picked up any unusual patterns of ionic storms, so everything should be safe. When they picked up a ship on the scanner they could not resist the temptation to make a quick attack. The UES Lancer/WA was put on alert and when the ship came into view the battlecruisers swung into action. The ship, the UES Hammerfire, offered no resistance. It was destroyed on the first pass. Pity they had fired first, perhaps much could have been learned from this experienced explorer.

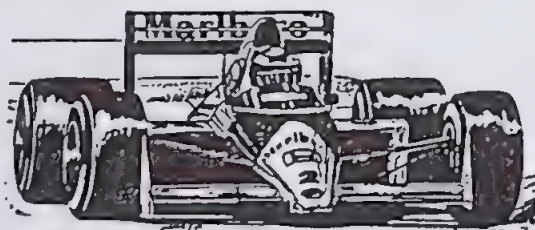
TERRA II

By the first week of the month the Alfur messengers had spread the word about the location of Blackqueen village of all the Lords of Valor invasion tribes. As it turned out, the only one within striking distance was the powerful Sturmfeuer. They completely encircled the village and launched a siege on all sections of the wall. The defenders paid them little attention. The massive walls and extensive moat built in the rocky crags was a formidable sight. The Sturmfeuer army gave up, moving on to easier targets. The extensive Blackqueen outpost system is still in tact, reporting on movements of tribes throughout the area to Slamdance headquarters.

Just to the south, the Byzantine army was guarding the inlet used by armies crossing over to the next continent. Early in the month the Tsumi Pathfinders tried to cross and were blocked. The battle-hardened Pathfinders launched a full scale attack across the sandy beaches. The dense formations were easy to hit, but with only a few bowmen firing from the Byzantine line, losses were limited to about three dozen. Then the Pathfinders

MEGAPRIX

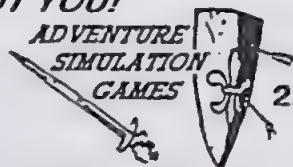
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archers let loose, decimating the front line. The assault troops surged forward against a Byzantine defensive line still reeling from the shock of the arrows. Several hundred Byzantine horsemen had died. By the second phase of the battle the Tsumi Pathfinders were into the line of archers, hacking them down with little resistance. The way was open to the south.

EARNSHAW ENTERPRISES

CONQUEST

Game #3: The smoke is finally clearing over the Realm, and the Supreme Ruler is Sylvan, played by Stephen Wieck of Atlanta, Georgia. Congratulations to Steve and all the other players in this well-fought game!

Game #5: This game seems to be winding up fast. At this writing, Eastmark, with all but one city, is on the brink of victory; the pockets of resistance offered up by Helos have been all but wiped out. Illeum and Zarland have been completely swept from the map, and it just seems a matter of time before Eastmark claims his prize.

OUTER REACHES

Game #1, Turn 13: One player still has the dominant lead in this game, but he is getting increasing competition from two other spirited players. One player, lurking in a corner of the galaxy, seems to be biding his time before striking out against the infiltrations of enemy ships. Combat has intensified, with several ships and an inactive player's colony being destroyed. The largest fleet is well in excess of 100 ships, with another fleet just at 100 ships. Two other players have around 50 ships each, and two players, pursuing defensive strategies, have less than 20 ships each. Two players have scouted significant portions of the galaxy and are colonizing at a rapid rate. The

galaxy is starting to look like shooting gallery. The real question is: Who will get caught in the middle?

Game #2, Turn 1: This game has just gotten underway, and the players are beginning to explore the regions surrounding their homeworlds. This game should see a fairly narrow number of strategies, as all of the players are either Human or Avarian. Stay tuned!

ECKERT GAMING GROUP

Games 1 & 2

The two oldest games are winding down now. There are about a half dozen players left in each, with three or four powerhouses. Two major army groups slugging it out in one province is often less decisive than smaller armies capturing undefended provinces. Also, captured provinces are often lost when the conquering army moves on the next target and the prior owner sends in troops that were to aid in the defense. Which player has put over 1,000 cavalry into a single province?

Games 3, 4, & 5

These games are in the middle stage, combat between established empires, but not yet between firm alliances of major players. In this phase diplomacy is the key to survival. In a single turn one player went from owning 12 provinces (over 10% of the world), to owning just four, in a single turn.

Games 6, 7, 8 & 9

These games are still in the divide-up-the-world phase of conquering the independent provinces. Often the easiest acquisition is the province your enemy just "liberated" from its independent status. Every game one or more players are knocked out early by another who simply storms their lightly defended home province. If you lose the 'screen' of independent militia, be sure you

leave enough defenders to take their place.

Game 10

Just underway.

EMPRISE GAME SYSTEMS

XENOPHOBE has undergone a period of consolidation and restructuring. Major conflicts that have been hinted at for months seem to be just about ready to boil over, with the renegade Pirates on the offensive against the Terrans and Arachnids. The new racial leaders, all of whom play for free, are whipping up political support or being replaced — they have to survive monthly voting sessions!

BLOOD PIT has been growing in leaps and bounds we have three arenas going full blast. The playtest arena (curiously numbered #2) is currently experimenting with the new Magic rules we are implementing, after finishing up the regular proving playtest and testing our new Battle Cries. Halflings have dominated from the start, especially MALA of BLANCO LOBO, though Dwarves and Half-Elves are coming on strong.

Our first commercial arena, christened by the players as Massacre Square Gardens, has produced a vicious killer by the name of GARTH THUNDERMUG, a warrior of POND SCUM. He currently has 4 wins, 1 loss and 2 kills and leads the ranking charts. Close behind in the rankings is the powerhouse Half-Orc named DRERC of THE WILD HUNT, with a 6-0-0 record is nothing but to fear.

Not to be outdone, in our second commercial game (named Maelstrom by its players) there is a brute of a warrior named KATY LIED of STATUS CIVILIZATION who has managed a 5-0-1 record. A Half-Orc by birth (or is that hatching?), KATY has decimated every opponent thus far. As one victim put it, "How can you

BACK ISSUES

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not be on the top of the rankings?"

ENTERTAINMENT PLUS

Adventurer's Guild

(excerpt from the diary of Ramon "Tolstoy" the Small)
Twelfth Week of the Year of the Wolf

The battles today were filled with action. It's no wonder the stands are packed with citizens of Antar and the surrounding countryside every week. Of the newer members of the guild, Shadowspawn bested each of the seven other adventurers in his battle group, and of the veterans Elirus proved himself worthy of the top-ranking adventurer position. Within one of the many battle groups in between I did not do so well, but then I never aspired to be a great warrior. Magic is going to be my specialty.

Being able to use combat magic is great! Now I think I know how Rhoze must have felt when she nearly killed me with that huge maul of hers today. I did exactly what my magic instructor Graydawn told me, focusing all my energy into the Daze spell, then hurling it into Rhoze's thick ogre skull. She stood there dumbfounded as I buried my spiked gauntlet into her stomach. As I recall I even got a few leg shots in before she recovered enough to warrant a second Daze spell. I had Rhoze down cold, if only those spells wouldn't have taken so much of my energy. No matter, the guildmaster Killian came out and ended the fight, and the judging Weapon Lords declared me the winner. Now I know I'll have to spend the next week working on my stamina so I can defeat my opponents after I daze them.

I accepted a challenge from Lord Fandil (another battle winner today), hoping to get some more experience with the Daze spell. He's a nice guy, I only wish he was more susceptible to my spell. I tried three times against him today, and each time he managed to resist the spell. You'd think he had some dwarven blood in him, like that dwarf named Revenge whose natural resistance to magic hindered my efforts to daze him (but to no avail, I dazed Revenge regardless! Hah). Anyway, Lord Fandil wumped me in the challenge fight, but I'm glad I accepted since it was good experience for both of us. Luckily we didn't have the freak accident that Faron the halfling and Korrman the dwarf did in their challenge fight. Korrman was pounding on Faron, when Faron made a desperation swing with her warhammer and actually cracked Korrman's skull. Faron is still feeling guilty. I hope she can get over the accident soon. I'm going to miss Korrman too.

That's all for now. I'd better get to bed since I'll be working on my physical endurance all next week. There's going to be a surprise or two come next week's battles.

[If you think you'd like to join Tolstoy in the Adventurer's Guild, see the Gameline section]

FLYING BUFFALO INC.

Recent winners of Flying Buffalo games: STARWEB games: Randy Smith, SW-1045. William Peeck, SW-1055. Dan Friedman, SW-1064. C. Isselhardt, SW-1070. Ron Wilson, SW-1071. Dave Roy, SW-1073. Ben F. Greene, SW-A1074. Don Watson, SW-1075. R. Throckmorton, SW-A1077. Tim Krieger, SW-1078. Robert Whiting, SW-1079. Peter Sears, SW-1081. Steve Virotek, SW-1083. George Kamber, SW-A1084. Rainer M. Schlichthere, SW-1085. Dave Roy, SW-1086. Richard Jarvis, SW-1087. James R. Brown, SW-1089. Michael C. Minnotte, SW-1090. Dennis Lee Shaw, SW-A1091. Dave Stender, SW-1092. W. Andrew York, SW-Z1093. Bill Chamberlain, SW-1094. Christopher Mauchline,

SW-1095. Linda Rummell, SW-A-1096. Rainer M. Schlichthere, SW-1098. Buddy Short, SW-1099. Andrew Borden-King, SW-1100. J. Stephen Sheilds, SW-1101. Richard Shows, SW-1104. MULTI-position STARWEB: John E. Gardner, SW-M/125. Terry Humphrey & Frank Lowther (tie) SW-M/128. Mark Seidemann, SW-M/129. Roy Kramp, SW-M/131. Frank Lowther, SW-M/134. Larry Rodin, SW-M/135. Chris Worrell, SW-M/136. EXTRA LONG Starweb games: Richard Sobocinski, SW-L/14. Michael Adams, SW-L/15. Russ Dawson, SW-L/16. Dave Newport (and Kevin Frey as the standby), SW-L/17. Starweb BITTER END games: Rushton Potts, SW-B/18. Don Washabaugh, SW-B/21. John Ferguson, SW-B/22.

NUCLEAR DESTRUCTION GAMES: Randy Butler, ND-780. Randy Butler & John Muije (tie), ND-781. George Jacobs & Ken Vogel (tie) ND-782. Mike Putch & Don Palmer (tie), ND-783. John Muije, ND-784. John Ramsay, ND-785. Christopher Thomas & Dan Warncke (tie) ND-788.

BATTLE PLAN GAMES: Homer Kimbrell, BP-1050. Dave Mattson, BP-1051. Dan Staples, BP-1055. David Callis, BP-1060. Chris Liacouras, BP-1058. Pekka Samuelsson, BP-1061. Donald Palmer, BP-1063. Ron Wilson, BP-1054. Homer Kimbrell, BP-1065. George Kinney, BP-1068. James Fronsee, BP-1069. Glenn Duval, BP-1070. Bill McClintock, BP-1071. Larry Rodin, BP-1072. George Dannenberg, BP-1073. Tod Lewark, BP-1074. James Dolan, BP-1075. Jason Jones, BP-1076. George Kinney, BP-1077. Patrick Smith, BP-1078. Craig Swenson, BP-1079. Kris Zierhut, BP-1080.

FEUDAL LORDS GAMES: Lewis Lahaise, FL-85. Geoff Price, FL-90. Paul Avenson, FL-93. Robert Kasa, FL-94. Joe Richards, FL-95. Virgil Noriega, FL-96. Lin Goldstein, FL-101. Hiroshi Kasanara, FL-J4. S Patel, FL-UK22. NUCLEAR WAR GAMES: Jeffrey Glass, NW-4.

GALACTIC CONFLICT GAMES: John R. Meyers, GC-73. Joe Spindler, GC-74.

WORLD WIDE BATTLE PLAN GAMES (Equal Forces): Bob Thompson, WW-2. John Phillips, WW-6. Larry Rodin, WW-A8. (Anonymous game). John D. Boyd, WW-16. WORLD WIDE BATTLE PLAN (Real Forces): WW-11, Daryl Hokama, Dave Webber, Mark Brennan, Bjorn Bennett, & Roland Dortch were the winning alliance. WW-13, Ken Pierce, Michel Legare, Alan Lemberg, James Hager, Benoit Giroux, and Wade Dube' were the winning alliance. WW-17, KC Caldwell & Ken Davis were the winning alliance. WW-19, Stephen Doyle, Michael Noth, Richard Cavins were the winning alliance. WW-21, Robert Johnson and Pat Smith were the winning alliance. This is the ONLY Real Forces game so far to end without at least one SUPER POWER or MAJOR POWER at the end. Robert was Cuba/Peru/Venezuela and Pat was Japan. WW-22, Michael Justus, Ronald Sills, Brady Dalton, James Hagar, Mark Brennan, Stephen Donawick, Maurice McLey, Brenden Hill, and George Dannenberg were the winning alliance. WW-26, Dan Beech, Brian McKenzie, Bruce McKenzie, and John Lowe were the winning alliance. WW-27, Phil Fisher, Richard Thomas, Kyle Mizokami, George Dannenberg, & Mark Brennan were the winning alliance. WW-31, Eric Robida, Stephen Donawick, Dan Beech, Brenden Hill, John Lowe, and George Dannenberg were the winning alliance. In IL-LUMINATI, the top 5 players in "Masters Points" (all with over 600 points) are: Mark Pfister (1022), Paul Balsamo (705), Jeff Wiewel (680), Wade Kingsley (660), and Sean C Mitchell (650).

GAMES ADVENTURE

EverMoore

PTGame #1 - Miss-communications dealt a great blow to the Sorceress and Weapons Master alliance. Both were to arrive simultaneously at a designated city. But due to poor communications the Sorceress arrived at one city while the Weapons Master at another. Whoops! Both players received 14 pages of mostly red-ink!

PTGame #2 - The deck has been reshuffled and the cards are on the table. The few remaining players are forced to take sides.

Welcome Overlords of Game #5

All Players - Players are encouraged to submit to Games Adventure their view or their Overlords view of game activity to be included in this column. Please note that your submission is for Paper Mayhem's Activity Corner.

GAME SYSTEMS INC

Dawn of the Ancients

Game 31 - Xerxes XII #11, Emperor of the Persians

Blow the golden trumpets, send runners to all corners of the globe, true history is made! At just over two years, Game 31 proves to be the longest running Dawn to date! Xerxes also sets the record for most Victory Points, at least that I've seen! Hail to you, great Xerxes! Your bust will long reside in the Hall of Heroes

EARTHWOOD - THE SEA KINGS

Game 22 - Integrity: #12, 13, 18, 20, & 21

Swords, wands, and armour; hand, head, and heart. The Integrity Alliance lives up to its ideals as its navies cross the seas, fully united. Five Golden Laurels await these fine, upstanding members of the realm!

Game 28 - Placid Seas: #'s 12 and 24

The heroic forces of the Atlantes and the Barbarian Warrior bring the calm after the storm as they ride the wave of victory. Just 23 turns, a year and 2 months, sees these noble sea captains docked at the pier adjoining the Hall of Heroes!

VENOM

Game 10 Final Four: #4 - WAH-ZOO, Demigod of Surprise; #9 - Demigoddess of; #11 - URVON, Demigod of Despise; #17 - ANONYMOUS, Demigod of Mystery. The briefest Final Combat yet seen, lasting but one turn of two rounds. One after another, WAH-ZOO, and URVON fell. When the cosmic dust had settled only one remained: Hail to thee, ANONYMOUS, GOD of Mystery!

Game 11 Final Four: #3 - ZARGON, Demigod of Mischief; #14 -, Demigod of; #17 - LIEIL, Demigod of Deceit; #18 - MYNTIC, Demigod of Velvet Fist. Two turns of combat saw MYNTIC fall at the end of the first, the others to follow soon after. The one who last stood was LIEIL, GOD of Deceit. Let us praise Him!

GAMES WITHOUT FRONTIERS

THE HEROIC AGE

Game 10: Asia Minor has had first blood drawn. Elements of the Carian Army led by King Nomion stormed into Ionia's secondary citadel (Nelson Hunter), of Ephesus. Caria with over 2,200 troops verses the Ionian citadels number of 600 behind the outer Palisades and walls. Many brave Carian soldiers met their deaths during the 60 rounds of combat (over six days). Caria retreated due to morale difficulties on the front line with

but 200 troops, mere hours from destroying the heavily defended Ionian citadel, and enslaving its inhabitants. A joyful 100 Ionian Soldiers cheered as the battle drew to a close. The Citadel held.

Elsewhere raiding has taken a down turn, as winter approaches, and the kingdoms settle back for several months preparing and plotting for the next year. No colonies have been taken yet, though one aborted attempt almost succeeded. Most of the colony sites have some kingdom located there, attempting to claim it as their own.

At least 4 Princesses were captured last turn, perhaps to become wives in some Foreign kingdom. Needless to say, many kings are preparing for war to retrieve their daughters.

Game II: A group of Ionians (Matt Heneghan) were travelling to Delos on a Holy Mission, when they were bushwacked by a Naval blockade by The Kingdom of Souther Sporades (John Schlosser). Could war be in the wings? Southern Sporades promptly followed its attack with a series of raids on Ionian Villages along the Aegean Sea.

Cephellania (Stan Rieman) has been sited raiding the Lycian coast (Ken Romig). Laconia (Joseph Boyett III) has also been raiding the Lycian Capitol of Phaselis.

MINDGATE

STARS OF THE DARK WELL URR REOPEN WAR WITH ATTACK IN HRILD SYSTEM

DG/C IRON BAT (Hrild System) - This city had a front row seat when the UC V or Ten attacked the DR Appollyon last month in the system jump range nearby. The 30,000 ton Vor Ten came out of jump on day 30 of 11-148 at a distance of 3 system hexes from the Appollyon, and immediately commenced firing with her beam batteries. The 30,000 ton Appollyon responded with beam fire and also launched 300 riders.

During the first round of combat, the Urr ship did minor damage to the Appollyon's aft section. At the same time, the Ranger ship's beams and riders shattered the fore section of the Vor Ten, killing most of the crew and knocking all but her defensive weapons out of action.

For the final 5 combat rounds, the Appollyon continued to pound the Vor Ten's fore section, but lost most of her riders to defensive beam fire while doing so. Only 15 of her 300 riders returned to the Appollyon at the conclusion of the battle.

IN DUSTDEVIL BLOWN UP DURING
SECOND ATTACK - ATTACKER IDENTIFIED
NA/C XAVER (Julian System) - A ship flying "IN Cestus" once again attacked IN Dustdevil in orbit around Revax last month. The 10,000 ton attacker poured beam fire into the defenseless 1,000 ton Dustdevil for 3 combat rounds, at which time her amidships shields failed and she blew up.

The Dominion Council has received proof of the attacker's identity. An active scan report sent to the Council by the SS Freedom shows the 10,000 ton MG Barracuda flying the colors "IN Cestus" during 10-148, the time of the first attack against the Dustdevil. Dominion Officials say that the Barracuda cannot be outlawed however since the ship has since left the Dominion and acquired non-aligned (NA) status. According to one source at the Council's Office of Staff Support, a bounty on the Barracuda is "in the works".

In a related story, the Council also received a scan (same source) showing the IN Christine Ann flying the colors "Up Yours Dominion" in Lastport System during

08-148. That ship is now non-aligned. No action is expected.

CORPORATE PRESIDENTS APPROVE RECALL
OF MINISTER OF STATE TRUMP
DM/C MARATHON REACH (Lastport System) - The Dominion's corporate president ended the controversy surrounding Donald Trump (OI/C Homeward Leap) as Minister of State last month when they voted to recall Trump by a narrow margin. In a 3 to 2 vote, the presidents ordered the recall of Trump as Minister of State. No action has yet been taken to elect a new Minister of State.

CMgr. Trump was outlawed during 06-148 for piracy after the violent boarding of the EM Lady Of the Stars which was docked at his city.

MICRO SOFTWARE DESIGN

Andromeda Cluster Game #6

At turn 6 the game continues to heat up, with an additional 6 ships being destroyed or damaged by sabotage following a turn that saw over 4 ships taken by the King C when entering or leaving orbit of Enif. Particularly hard hit in the last two turns were Inorganics Inc. and Hudson's Bay Company with United Fruit appearing to be the principle (but not sole) attacker. Several new systems were announced in the news and all indications are that even more systems have been discovered but are being kept secret. Business leaders continue to be Inorganics (who will probably drop back after the attacks this turn), Se'Boh Ponex and Sylverdawn, Inc. The most visible of the criminal companies continue to be United Fruit and Philantropitima.

PAPER TIGERS

The Land of Karrus

At the beautiful Caverns of Lukary, the clever Recan of the Hegi Militia has run into some puzzling and difficult situations. Jegall has been discovered by another group of Heqi, Alror's Prub Clan, but no one has yet approached its ancient meeting grounds. Will these two Leaders be the first to bear away a Relic of the Old Ones? Or will they be joined by worthy questers?

Antarc and the Arclight Brigade turned their blue-light weapons on the Utterly Utrians. Slavedriver's army fought-back and the battle was close. But Antarc and energy beams proved to be too much for the Utrian group.

Spaceman Spiff and his bawdy Perverted Pillagers threw a month-long party. Among other unseemly activities, it featured the dismantling of an unfortunate group of Karrutians, the Karruts. Bugs and his Karruts

were brave if foolish: they forgot to eat their spinach, and were roundly pounded three times. Apparently, the Heqi leader does not intend to stop until he gets a trophy off the corpse of Bugs.

The time is one for announcing ideologies. First, the leader of the Leathernecks, Touche' Turtle, has issued a statement of purpose for his new alliance, The Amuck Conquerors and Melancholy Explorers (A.C.M.E.)

Nagla Holy Shield of the Holy Guardians is noted for his superior religious fervor and his favor with the Ancestors. Another well-respected Karrutian Elder is Kreesha Syraka. Her Arkane Seekers are said to be direct descendants of the Old Ones. The Amazing Arthropods, led by Avenger Ant, also have a look of passion about them. Their mission is vengeance on their enemies.

Pragmatists are also seen on Karrus. A band of Utrian mercenaries, the B-52's, are willing to sell their services to the highest bidder. They are led by a madman who calls himself Dr. Strangelove.

Some groups are a bizarre mixture. A Heqi band of "misfit mongrels" who think and act like intelligent wolves, the Clockwork Mayhem is a frightening blend of brutality, loyalty, purpose, and insanity. Their leader Mr. Midnite, is a paradoxical figure in his dualistic roles of villain and hero.

Some groups are overtly dark in purpose. The Dreamweavers are led by One Who Dreams Evil. We are all acquainted with Tribe Mephistopheles and their leader Asmodeus.

Speaking of the Tribe, Asmodeus got bored, not to mention hungry, this month, due to a prolonged lack of combat. He ordered his army to attack the Pren Trading Post of Jol in the hopes of finding fresh meat as well as riches. His obedient Clefas tried to batter down the walls of the compound, but inflicted little damage. The Utrians quickly discovered the utter futility of attempting to perform a takeover attempt on the empty Trading Post. There's nothing quite so dispiriting as having a barbecue with a non-existent main meal. Maybe Asmodeus should get together with Spaceman Spiff? The Pren issued a press statement condemning the violence, then announced their "First Annual Armistice Day Sale."



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SMUGGLER'S BLUES

By Chris Gorde

The last few days had been eventful and informative, mused Captain Gorde as Commodore White, Hakim, Vickers, Perry, and himself were waiting for Sean MacWilliams to report back from his arranged meeting with his friends from the London Thieves Guild. Sean suggested that he could probably help find out some important information about Sir James Robbins, the man responsible for Sir Horace Greenley's disappearance.

The POSEIDON'S TRIDENT was calm as she rose and fell with the waves in London harbor. Noone was allowed to go ashore, except on Captain's orders. As an afterthought, Christian sent his newest officer, 4th Lt. Weaver, ashore with four men to search the residence of Sir Horace for any clues as to his whereabouts.

"Sah, Mr. MacWilliams and his men are rowing back from the docks."

"Thank you Olbright. Now go and tell Midshipman Post to have the aweigh team report to my cabin as soon as possible."

"Perhaps now we can end this waiting game, eh Hakim?"

"Captain, once we have something to go on, my blade won't return to its scabbard until the dogs are dead and Sir Horace is safe again!"

Always the straight-forward type that one thought Gorde. White just mopped his brow with his sleeve and sipped on his rum. He was a patient man.

The other two officers, Jeremy Vickers and Simon Perry went over some last minute details involving ship's business, such as supplies, tidetables, and currents.

After a bit, someone blew the ship's whistle, announcing the return of the men and Sean. The huge Scot lumbered inside the humid cabin, lowering his head so as not to get another goose-egg on the door frame.

"Reporting as directed Sir."

"Sean, sit down and have a taste of rum."

"Thankee Captain! That is exactly what me old pipes are crying for today!"

A full flagon of the liquor vanished down the man's gullet and then he had enough cheek to hold it out for some more. Obliging the thirsty bear with another round, Gorde inquired about the meeting.

"Sir, the old man said that Sir James was a dangerous rascal to tangle, but after I slipped him Commodore White's gold, he was a bit more specific."

Pausing for effect, MacWilliams looked around him at all the officers one at a time and then went on. He should've been in the theatre with Shakespeare instead of on a merchantman.

"Mr. Sticky Fingers told me that Robbins has an estate outside of London about three miles to

the northwest. It's a four-story job with a nice guest house and stables to boot. More importantly, the entire first floor has been converted into a guard's barracks. The place holds about fifty men inside."

"What about the guest house?", asked the Arab Hakim.

"As of yesterday, it was still empty. Perhaps it's used for storage?"

"And the entrances?" questioned White.

"Sir, the maingate to the south is heavily guarded by as many as ten men during the night, half that during daylight hours. The servant's gate to the northeast is not as critical to them, because only a few men guard it most of the time usually."

"Anything else Sean?"

"Captain, it seems that Robbins does indeed have a secret estate some where between here and Plymouth. In fact, Old Peter gave me the exact location on this map."

Examining the map given to him, Gorde listened as the big man went on with his report.

"It's not as big as the other, but according to Old Peter, Robbins keeps fifteen to twenty men there at all times. The stables outside are heavily guarded at all times. The only road is always patrolled and the woods surrounding are said to be just as thick with his henchmen."

"I wonder why Sir James has another house so far from London, his main base of operations?" commented Simon to no one in particular.

"He also has a lighthouse and some small ships in Plymouth," went on Sean, "Probably a secure hidaway for his smuggled goods, while they wait or Her majesty's coastal sloops to shift their patrols to another sector." explained White.

"Any idea where Robbins is at the moment Sean?"

Captain, the latest information puts the scoundrel at his small estate."

"Well gentlemen, any suggestions?"

"I say we storm the larger estate outside of the city Captain. It's bound to be the place Sir Horace is being held prisoner, what with all the security."

"Hakim, that is probably true, however, if we had Robbins as a hostage we could make the guards release Horace to us without a fight and then take the estate for our own!"

"Captain Gorde! I will not stand here and listen to these insane, illegal proposals. You have no right to assault any man's holdings or person for whatever the reason!"

"Commodore, your position here aboard my ship is tenuous at best. If you want to capture a smuggler for the Queen, and still stay alive, then you had better realize that we are going to do things my way. More importantly, it's my friend whose life is in danger, so just be so kind as to remove your water-

walking sandals and see things as they really are...in all shades of color, and not just in black and white!"

"Well, it's not right to perform a crime to correct another."

"You are entitled to your opinions but don't come off as if you are demanding certain actions; Furthermore, in the future, make suggestions only. That is all Commodore!"

The Royal Navy officer stormed out of the cabin.

After White had left, Gorde rubbed his temple and sighed. "Sean, be so good as to pour me a spot of rum to ease this clamour in my head."

"His feathers are sure ruffled Sir," laughed the Scotsman as he passed the flagon to Gorde.

"Don't be disrespectful now. The poor bloke is practically by himself with desperation and is in cahoots with a bunch of ruffians, who don't believe that criminals have "rights". Now off you go to the lot of you. Simon, please let me know when Mr. Weaver arrives."

Settling down behind this desk, Gorde began to form a more detailed plan on his next move against Sir James in his mind.

Around nine o'clock, Weaver and his men reported back to the ship with their findings. While searching the home of Horace, the men discovered a note next to a wall of books in the library. The note gave the time and place of another rendezvous for the smugglers. This particular one was off the coast of Normandy in one weeks time, July 8th, at 10 o'clock in the evening.

Gorde thought of Viktor Rachnoff, the mercenary captain who was abducted in the Mermaid Inn a few weeks previously. This man was probably at the bottom of the River Thames by now for sure, because he had attempted to double-cross his master by stealing some of the smuggled goods. Gorde had no remorse for not helping Rachnoff that night with Jeremy Vickers at the tavern. In fact, it probably would've meant that destruction of the TRIDENT and the OTTER, Viktor's ship. Because if the French or English patrols didn't get them, then Sir James' remaining ships would've.

The next day was business as usual aboard the TRIDENT. Midshipmen Post and Johnston were seeing to the resupply of the ship's stores, under the watchful gaze of Vickers. Besides the mundane articles, such as food, water, rope, etc., frames for half the 12-pounders were brought aboard, as well as some for the swivel guns.

These frames were fitted with wheels, so that they could be used ashore for fire support. In addition to all this, boarding nets and an extra jolly boat was purchased for later use.

All this work was accomplished in an unorthodox manner. Instead of loading from the

dockside, the men had to bring all of the materials over in the 20-man gig in order to prevent any security problems that could've arose.

Needless to say, the men resented being cooped up all day and by evening were openly grumbling about not being able to spend their shares in the local taverns, gambling halls, and brothels. Gorde's officers were hard pressed to keep the men in line, and one man had to be flogged for trying to strike Hakim. The seaman was spared a certain death at the hands of the Arab, who wielded the finest Damascus blade this side of the globe; however, the poor bloke didn't believe that when it was all over.

Four days later, the POSEIDON'S TRIDENT was secluded in a cove off the coast of England, near the London-Plymouth road. It was dawn and she creaked at her anchorage, while the watch kept their vigil manning the newly-purchased swivels and the run-out 12-pounders with Sean Mac-Williams in command.

First mate, Simon Perry, and four men, were dropped off earlier in Portsmouth one night, in the hopes of finding another ship for Gorde to buy. The TRIDENT would be kept so as to give the larger ship an escort. On the return trip to London, Perry and his men would be picked up at the same place and time.

Meanwhile, Commodore White, Hakim, Vickers, and Christian were scouting out the secret estate of Sir James. They had found the place after "persuading" one of the guards to spill his guts as to the whereabouts of the house and stables. The unfortunate was taken while Gorde and his crew of 30 came off the beach.

"Well Commodore, there is the estate of the bastard we both desire to see pay for his shenanigans. Still undecided as to the "legality" of this attack?"

"Your statements makes sense, in the fact that this scum must pay for the murders of my fellow investigators, nevertheless, I'm an officer in the Queen's service and expected to be given the proper respect at all times Captain Gorde!"

"Sah, it's almost daylight. We had better get cracking soon or the whole affair will be for naught."

"Your absolutely correct Mr. Weaver. Jeremy your on point, go to work."

Vickers went ahead to scout around and to take care of the stable guards. He noticed three guards were patrolling the ground near the stable, all were carrying muskets and personal blades.

The ninja selected several leaf-handed arrows from his quiver. These special arrows, with their own unique artistic designs, were capable of killing a man outright more often than the regular shafts.

After quietly stringing his daikyu, Jeremy fired at the nearest lone guard. The man went down without a sound. The arrow had embedded itself in the man's head. A second guard, witnessing the killing, raised his musket to fire, but Jeremy had already fired a volley of three arrows. Two struck

him, bringing him down. Luckily, the musket didn't go off when it hit the ground.

The last guard was around the other side relieving himself, when much to his horror a katana blade was sticking out of the front of him. After wiping the blade on the dead man's clothing, Vickers motioned for the others to come forward.

Gorde led the others toward the stable doors. Two more guards were inside armed with pistols. They were preparing for the day when Gorde and White burst in with their blades drawn. Gorde tackled the first man, knocking him to the dirt floor, and then stabbed downward several times. White had dispatched his opponent with a well-placed thrust to the vitals.

Five men remained behind to stop any attempt by the smugglers to escape via the horses. After four guards around the house were killed, eight of the seamen were told to guard against any escapes as well, or any roving patrols that still might be lurking about, especially from the roadway.

The others immediately burst into the main house from whatever means of entry. Christian, armed with a blunderbuss now, kicked in the front door and was confronted by two men with swords still in their scabbards. The shotgun blast blew them both backwards across the room.

"Knock, knock gentlemen!"

In other rooms, on the first floor, he could hear the clash of steel and the blasts from other weapons. Hakim appeared at the kitchen door. "First floor secure, sir."

"How many guards did you count?"

"We killed four and captured one man. A cook."

"Excellent. Let's move upstairs fast! Remember, we need Sir James alive."

Suddenly, Gorde heard musket fire above him. Drawing his pistols, he sprinted up the stairs two-at-a-time, with Hakim right behind him.

At the top of the stairs, Christian saw three men charging toward them. He shot the first man in the chest, but his second round went wide of the second closest man. Tossing his useless pistols into the man's face gave Gorde enough time to draw his cutlass. He parried a pair of sword cuts from the temporarily blinded swordsman.

Hakim stabbed the third guard through his belly. It was like slaughtering cattle to the Arab.

Gorde managed to press his opponent back down to the hallway, finally in desperation, the man leaped through a window to the ground below. His crumpled body lay atop one of Gorde's men. Both were dead.

A quick search by the two swordmates, and five others who followed, produced nothing but an open window in one of the smaller rooms. Moving to the window, Gorde could see two more dead seamen below. He knew Robbins had probably slipped away.

Six more guards were taken alive. Hakim questioning them, soon Gorde learned that Sir James was not among those found dead, but had indeed

escaped into the woods on foot.

"Jeremy, take a dozen men and comb the woods towards the road for the elusive Sir James."

"Yes sir, right away."

"White meanwhile had searched the house and stable thoroughly. In the latter, he discovered a cache of smuggled goods worth several thousand pounds. In the study, he found inventory manifests and shipping schedules for Robbins's ships.

"This is exactly what we need to shut down Robbins!", exclaimed the excited commodore. "With this evidence, I can have him arrested for smuggling. We've done it!"

"We've also confirmed that Sir Horace must be prisoner at the London estate.", said Gorde. "Sir James made the mistake of writing down a note to his senior Lt. here at this house. It gives instructions and dates as to the movement of Sir Horace from London to this place."

"Well let's hope then that Robbins won't kill Greenley because of your failed attempt to capture him Captain Gorde."

"Let's hope that he doesn't make any long-term plans for the future if he does."

"When we get back to London I'll make contact with an old navy acquaintance and have some marines help in the rescue of your friend."

"Thank you Commodore. Now let's get this capture booty back to the TRIDENT, and head for London."

"The Queen will be most pleased with the value of the smuggled goods; moreover, she'll be especially grateful to me when I present her with the captured ships and confiscated properties of Sir James Robbins. It might even get me a promotion and commendation!"

"That's all fine for you, but what can my men and myself expect for assisting you in this matter?"

"You might get your friend and business partner back in one piece Gorde."

Now it was Gorde's turn to sulk as he thought of White's comments concerning their compensation for helping the Queen. After a brief stop in Portsmouth to pick up Perry and his men, the TRIDENT made all sail for London harbor, but no matter how hard they tried, the tides and winds were against them.

Three days later, they returned to the familiar waters of London and this time decided to dock at the first available berth.

Sean went to see Peter Grail again and the old thief had reported that Robbins had returned to his estate yesterday at a full gallop atop a horse. The estate showed signs of extraordinary activity, but nothing departed the gates after Robbins arrived.

"It would seem that Robbins still has Greenley in the protection of his estate Captain," said White.

"Well your fellow in the Navy to send those marines over to the ship tonight, because we're moving on Robbins at first light."

Through his contact, White arranged for the promised marines. They would meet White a mile from the estate of Sir James for directions, rather

than at the docks, because of possible security leaks.

Gorde had time to work out a rescue plan while the TRIDENT made its slow journey back to London. His plan involved making a quick rescue of Horace with only a few highly trained men, who were being instructed by Vickers. This would be their christening mission. After a pre-arranged signal for success was given by the rescus team, White and Gorde's other officer would lead forty marines and the same number of seamen in an all-out assault for the estate.

It was now five in the morning on the day of July 10th. Vickers, his five best students, and Gorde were now crouched outside Robbins' small servants entrance. Hiding in the shadows, dressed in black and with charcoaled skin, the seven made final preparations for their raid. Each man carried a small explosive charge of gunpowder, plus their own personal weapons.

Jeremy moved ahead of the others to clear the way for them. Once picking the lock, he moved inside to take care of business. A moment later, Vickers reappeared and motioned for the others to quickly get inside.

Just inside the gate, two men lay dead with ghastly wounds still bleeding. The ninja and his pupils spread out to incapacitate any nearby patrols. Gorde followed the men as they made their way to the house of Sir James. Each time roving guards were seen within minutes they were dead and hidden. Luckily, they were next to the gardens and the foliage provided excellent concealment.

Once at the mansion, Vickers scaled upwards, using the cracks in the masonry for hand and foot holds. A knotted rope came down to the waiting men from a dark four-story window. Soon all were up and preparing themselves for the next task.

Christian opened the door just enough to let in some lantern light in from the hallway and peered out. There was a couple guards standing before a door at the far end of the hallway. Gorde's dirk found its mark in the man's chest, while one of Jeremy's infamous leaf-headed arrows pinned the other man to the door, again an excellent head shot. Gorde and his trained killers raced for the door, tried the handle and found it secured. A quick search of the bodies produced a key from the second man's necklace. The door was soon opened and the seven found Sir Horace sitting up in bed, looking much relieved to see a familiar face, or at least a darkened familiar face.

"Ah, it's about time you showed up Christian. I was beginning to suspect about our partnership."

"Your gratitude overwhelms me you old dog. Now be a good man and get dressed into something presentable. Wouldn't want you parading yourself around in your birthday suit. It might frighten the ladies of the London social circuit."

"Always the comedian you rascal."

Checking the hallway for any sign of detection, the little group hid the bodies inside the bedroom and then went towards the stairs leading down to

the third floor.

At a window on the same side of the servant's entrance, Jeremy placed a lantern with a red globe and lit it. Within seconds, the sound of gunfire could be heard outside, mingling with the shouts and screams of men exchanging lead and steel.

Charging down the stairs, they met several surprised guards who were coming out of various doors to investigate the sounds of gunfire. Blunderbuss fire from Gorde and two others finished the guards investigation.

Once they were down to the second floor stairway, Gorde and his companions lit their fuses to the charges they had brought and tossed them down into the barracks area. The devastating rear attack, not to mention the concussion, helped buy White's marines and Gorde's officers some time in order to reach the barracks with fewer casualties.

This unexpected attack didn't go unnoticed as some of the guardsmen fired upon the raiders. Gorde ducked as a musketball whizzed past his head and ricocheted. A scream from behind him told him that one of his men, or possibly Horace was down. he raised his blunderbuss to his shoulder and fired, immediately relocating for another shot. A guard returned the blast with one of his own and hit one of Vicker's men. The poor wretch collapsed to the floor kicking his heels against the woodwork.

Outside, White and his redcoats were fighting hand-to-hand with Robbins and his guards. Hakim and Sean MacWilliams were over by a window fighting a half dozen guards. The guards never had a chance.

The next few minutes brought the battle to a close as Robbins and his men surrendered to the government troops and the seamen. Many of Robbins' men were dead the others left alive were all wounded at least twice.

White entered the destroyed barracks area and stepped over the corpses to where Gorde and his men were standing. Sir Horace was sitting down in order to catch his breath after all the excitement.

"It's over Captain. We've taken Robbins and broke up the smuggling ring." "I hope you've reconsidered in regards to rewarding my men and myself for services rendered to the Queen."

"I have already arranged for the deed of the smaller estate and a percentage of the confiscated goods to be transferred to you to show my appreciation for saving my life and riding the Queen of a dangerous criminal, with friends in high places."

"Won't those friends try to help him at this trial?"

"They would be foolish to try, because of possible charges of aiding a smuggler. So I wouldn't worry about Robbins going free Captain."

"Sah."

"Yes, what is it Mr. Weaver?"

Mr. Perry has assembled the men outside for muster. He said to tell you that we have fifteen new openings in the ship's company and another five who need medical attention soon."

"Tell Mr. Perry to start back for the ship after

he finds a doctor for the wounded."

"Can we go now Christian?" said Horace from his place on the steps.

"As soon as you can get up and help me get to a doctor. Seems I caught some splinters in my side from one of the guard's stray bullets that hit the bannister."

The next week was spent reorganizing Gorde's assets and acquisitions. The new ship, the LUCIFER, was paid for and Perry arranged for its delivery to London harbor. Sir Horace was more than pleased to find a buyer for the confiscated estate near Plymouth. Gorde decided to settle in Falmouth with an estate of similar value.

Sir Horace insisted that Christian stay at his mansion, in the London suburbs overlooking the city, while he recovered from his wounds. A doctor was found, who happened to be looking for a new start somewhere, and he was permanently hired to be Gorde's personal physician. When the time would come for Gorde to eventually leave for the sea, the doctor would also go with him aboard the LUCIFER.

Two weeks after his capture, Sir James Robbins was sentenced to life imprisonment in the Tower of London. His surviving henchmen received various punishments ranging from floggings to hangings.

Sir Horace's accountant was summoned to the London estate for a financial report concerning the partnership between Horace and Gorde.

"Mr. Evans, what is the current balance of Captain Gorde's holdings?"

"From what I've reading in front of me, I estimate that the Captain has 5,500 pounds in liquid assets, 25,000 in real estate in Palmouth, and with half ownership of the TRIDENT and the LUCIFER, about 8,000 pounds in the ships."

"Well Christian, what do you have in mind for the future profits?"

"Horace, I've been considering the possibility of returning to West Africa to visit the Caprians. The last shipment was valued at a couple thousand pounds for each of us and I would like to further strengthen our relationship with them. My goal is to increase our profits considerably."

"How do you propose to do this and what can I do to help?"

"Mr. Evans, would you be so kind as to leave us for a moment while I speak with Sir Horace privately?"

After the bookkeeper retreated to the next room Gorde explained his plans to his partner. At first Horace was skeptical but after an hours time, Sir Horace agreed to Gorde's proposals.

Gorde and his crew sailed for Falmouth and his new estate in the county of Cornwall. It was a two-story mansion that had a few hundred acres surrounding it. The land was rented by local farmers, so this income helped keep the place relatively well-kept.

The only modifications were the construction of a thirty man guardhouse and an iron fence

around the grounds surrounding the main estate. Mr. Perkins, the rescued slave from Caprious, was made steward of the estate in Gorde's absence.

After a weeks rest and relaxation at the new estate, Gorde and his men had had enough of the life on land and itched for the sea again. Therefore, with the ships provisioned and new replacements sworn into the ship's companies, the two vessels sailed south.

Christian watched his men work the new ship through her paces. Unfortunately, the original crew of the TRIDENT had to be split up equally between the two ships to balance out the experienced with the green seamen. This was the best way to train the new men, but it was difficult to relax when such a mixed lot was responsible for keeping the ships afloat.

The Lucifer was a triple-masted vessel with a crew of two hundred. It mounted 24, 18-pound cannons, which two were bow chasers. Twenty swivels bristled along her sides and observation posts. She also carried a larger assortment of landing craft than the Trident. Together the two ships would be formidable.

First officer, Simon Perry was promoted to Junior Captain and now the master of the TRIDENT. He handled his command with awesome precision. With over fifty years experience aboard sailing ships, Perry was one of the few grand old men capable of standing up the rigors of command.

Because of the opening left vacant by Perry's promotion, all the other officers were in high spirits; and thereby, so were the men.

Gorde retired to his cabin at five bells to make his log entry and have a bite to eat before turning in for the night. In two weeks, they would reach their port-of-call.

PBM ACTIVITY CORNER

SAR-A-KAN GAMES

FIRE IN THE GALAXY

GALAXY Y2: This month saw the demise of HOUSE JHEREG, the KRELLAN ALLIANCE, and DRAMIL, as this galaxy continued it's war frenzy! Jhereg fell to a combination of losing it's HW to R.U.S.H. and Internal revolution on it's alternate SOG, and reverted to Neutral status. Krellan fell when E.V.I.L. took out it's relocated SOG, leaving no place for Krellan's government to run! Dramil, heavily damaged from an abortive assault on a Rush colony, was too weak to repel an assault on it's HW by ARSENAL early in the month, and lacked a high-tech colony for an alternate SOG. TATU captured ISENGUARD's HW, forcing Isenguard to relocate to it's alternate SOG!

GALAXY SRI: War rears it's head in this galaxy as RASHKA and KASHMIR have "gone to the mattresses" over a TL-6 planet! Rashka attacked Indrin and failed to conquer it, thus letting the neutral send out a cry for assistance via Broadband. Kashmir answered and attacked Rashka from the rear, destroying it's assault fleet and capturing numerous transports and freighters (with many tanks on board it's rumored!) Rashka responded by counter-attacking with it's Main Battle Fleet! So far over 2000 FTR and 500 warships have been lost in this war of escalation!

GALAXY SBI: NOTHVA RHAGLAW has attacked INTELICON's Homeworld! Breising past Intelicon's orbit defenses, Nothva ran into real hard times on the surface, finding Intelicon defending with seven manned Tunnel Forts and over 100 AATVs and GOLIATHS! Battle continues at this time, with rumors flying that both sides have been busy calling up reinforcements and burning the FTLC units contacting allies!

REMAINING GALAXIES: No major altercations this month.

SCHUBEL & SON INC

War 1940 - Game 9 - The Allies have invaded Japan! The Allies are definitely gaining the upper hand in the war.

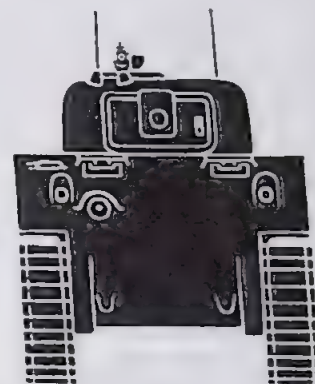
Siege America - Game 3 - The Communists were defeated in April! The largest USA Army was the Army of the Northeast played by Richard Cser. Congratulations on a hard fought victory!

Global Supremacy - Game 30 - Chad and its allies have attacked the Soviet Union and Ireland, two of the largest empires in the game. A major war is likely to begin soon.

Global Supremacy - Game 31 - Canada continues to hunt down and capture the nation's Super Spies. After being captured, they are all taken to a high security prison. None of the Super Spies have yet been able to escape. All the major alliances continue to attack the DFA.

Global Supremacy - Game 25 - Columbia has found a shipment of securities after month's of investigation. The shipment was "lost" while being transported years ago.

VIETNAM - Game 5 - The North Vietnamese are using MIG'S to bomb the South Vietnamese and Allies retaliate with B52 bombings which do much greater damage. The war continues.



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Conventions

June 28-Jul.1, 1990, ORIGINS/DRAGON-CON '90. Atlanta Hilton and Towers, Atlanta, GA. GoH: Tom Clancy, Doug Niles, Registration: TBA. Write: Origins '90, P.O. Box 47698, Atlanta, GA 30362.

July 6, 7, & 8, 1990 Our Con '90

Guests: Artists Larry Dixon, Loren G. Bagby Mike Keeney; Author, Mercedes Lackey; Conservationist, Doris Mager and her Raptors; Game Designers (tentative), Steve Jackson, Garry Spiegle, and Alan Hammack.

• Panels • Readings • Movies (3 Rooms) • Reel Theatre • Gaming (Incl. AD&D tournament) • Art Show & Contest (pro & amateur) • Dealers Room • Filksinging • Costume Contest • Japanimation • And lots, lots more!!!

The convention site is the UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO in MONTEVALLO, ALABAMA. Convention costs: \$7.50 until March 1st; 10.00 March 1-June 1; \$15.00 at the door; Day - Trippers \$8.50 at door.

Make checks payable to OURCON, U. of Montevallo Station 6571, Box 2692, Montevallo, AL 35115. Attn. M. Warner. For any additional info. call (205) 665-4957.

Atlanticon '90

The Baltimore Convention Center & The Baltimore Sheraton, Inner Harbor Hotel, July 13 - 15, 1990. For information write to:

Atlanticon '90
PO Box 15405
Baltimore, MD 21220
Phone: (301) 574-5066

GATEWAY 10: August 31st-September 3rd, 1990 at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel.

ORCCON 14: February 15th-18th, 1991 at the Los Angeles Airport Hilton Hotel.

GAMEX '91: May 24th-27th, 1991 at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel.

GATEWAY 11: August 30th-September 2nd, 1991 at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel.

ORCCON 15: February 14th-17th, 1992 at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel.

GAMEX '92: May 22nd-25th, 1992 at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel.

GATEWAY 12: September 4th-7th, 1992, at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel.

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ANDCON '90

Sept. 8th-9th, 1990 (Sat/Sun) from 9 a.m. to Midnight Sat., 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sun. at Kent State University Student Center, Kent, Ohio. Events: Board games including diplomacy, BattleTech, Car Wars, ASL, Star Fleet Battles, and many, many more. Roleplaying events will include AD&D, Champions, RoleMaster, Call of Cthulhu, and many more. World War II naval, Mustangs, & Messerschmitts, and other miniatures events will also be featured. DETAILS: There will be no event fees, although a \$1.00 deposit is required for each event, and is returned to you if you participate in the event. There is no pre-registration at AndCon '90. All events will be available for signup during the convention. TICKETS: Weekend passes are \$7.00 in advance, \$9.00 at the door. Single day passes are \$4.00 in advance, \$5.00 at the door. Your ticket price is the only fee you will have to pay, there are NO event fees at AndCon. Make all checks payable to Andon Games. Please send all requests for tickets to ANDON GAMES * P.O. BOX 142 * Kent, OH 44240.

TACTICON '90

The Denver Gamers Association presents TactiCon '90. Held at the Sheraton Hotel of Lakewood on September 14, 15, 16 1990. Also participating will be the Colorado Springs Gaming Society and S.A.I.G.E., the local RPGA club. Gaming of all sorts--board and role-playing games, computer games, miniatures. Other activities include several auctions and a figure-painting contest. Guest-of-honor to be announced. Events include Victory in the Pacific, Civilization, Kingmaker, Advanced Squad leader, official RPGA tournaments including, Paranoia, D&D, AD&D, and special tour-

naments for beginner role-players. The Puffing Billy Tournament for railroad gamers makes another appearance and a large variety of miniature events will run. Preregistration--\$15 for the weekend. For more information, contact the Denver Gamers Association, PO Box 440058, Aurora, CO or phone (303) 680-7824.

The Calgary Gaming Convention - 1990 Edition Sept. 21 to 23

The Canadian Wargamers Group would like to extend an invitation to all gamers to come to Calgary, September 21st to 23rd, for The Calgary Gaming Convention. This is our third year running this convention and includes many events to introduce to the novice as well as challenge the expert gamer.

We have an Open Gaming area available throughout the convention as well as our annual game auction which had over 300 games exchanging hands. For further information concerning the details to the Calgary Gaming Convention write to:

CWG - Convention '90
207 Bernard Drive NW
Calgary, Alberta
T3K 2B6 CANADA

StarCon '90

October 26-28, American's Centre, Menasha, WI 54952. Mailing Info. for further information:

StarCon '90
1112 N. Lake St.
Neenah, WI 54956
(414) 725-2555

ELECTRONIC GAMES EXPO, the first National electronic games exposition and trade show, featuring products for Nintendo, SEGA, Atari, NEC, Commodore and IBM, will be held November 29-December 2 at the Oakland Convention Center in Oakland, California.

Expected attendance shall exceed 20,000 visitors, 3,000 trade and 150 exhibiting companies during the four day show. ELECTRONIC GAMES EXPO - 465 Columbus Avenue, Suite 285 • Valhalla, NY 10595

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PBM BULLETIN BOARD

The PBM BULLETIN BOARD is your opportunity to place player notices, rumors, advertisements, etc. Rates are 5¢ per word with a 20-word minimum. Your return address and game name that your notice is concerned with are free. Companies that wish to use the PBM BULLETIN BOARD for advertising will be charged 5¢ per word fee and \$30.00 for their return address.

CANADIAN GAMERS AND GMS

I plan to operate one of Schubel and Sons games, and would like input from Canadian gamers and GMS. Which game would you like to see on this side of the exchange rate and postal systems? What changes? Please contact me at:

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Colleen Mattson
Box 123
Ladysmith, WI 54848

I am interested in contacting other PBM gamers or game companies in my area (and other PBM diplomats). Please contact me at the following address. I am currently playing Galactic Prisoners, Death & Sorrow, and I just joined Star Cluster Omega.

Christopher Mackesy
9566 Autumn Shade
San Antonio, Texas 78250

XENOPHOBE

Xenophobe is a computer moderated, open ended science fiction game. The KK'redak are one of the four races in the game, and for a limited time the KK'redak government is making the following offer: the first 5 people who join our race in response to this ad will receive their first ship setup absolutely FREE! That's right, we'll pay for your first ship for you. Not only that, we'll also give your ship(s) extra credits (game currency)! If you have any questions about the KK'redak race, contact: Sean Harty, 14 Mountain View, Irvine, CA 92715-3530. (714) 854-0767.

The Play-By-Mail Association

The PBMA is a trade organization for the play-by-mail gaming industry. If you would like FREE information about play-by-mail gaming, write to:
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The PBM Company ratings are ratings on the service of PBM companies sent to us by readers and other PBM gamers. The companies are rated on the scale of 1 to 9 with 1 being the lowest and 9 being the highest ratings. Companies listed have a minimum of 10 responses.

Things to consider when rating the companies are dependability, quickness of service, how well they handle player questions, how well they keep their players informed, and how well they adapt to the player needs. You can update your rating periodically if there are changes in the service of the company. Just send in another rating sheet and we will change the rating on your file.

	COMPANY	RATING	RESP
1	Sar-a-kan Games	8.600	15
2	Grandel Inc	8.542	48
3	Twin Engine Gaming	8.519	27
4	Silvius & Berchtold	8.150	20
5	C-T Simulations	8.121	29
6	Orpheus Publishing Co	8.063	24
7	C² Simulations	7.958	24
8	Simcoarum Systems	7.900	10
9	Battle-Magic Gaming	7.804	23
10	Flying Buffalo Inc	7.706	270
11	Eckert Gaming Group	7.682	28
12	Graaf Simulations	7.676	128
13	Midnight Games	7.641	117
	LAMA	7.641	40
15	Emprise Game Systems	7.584	62
16	Cyborg Games	7.539	66
17	Andon Games	7.477	64
18	Blue Panther Ent	7.400	15
19	Game Systems Inc	7.380	133
20	Games Without Frontier	7.239	23
21	Dragonbyte	7.222	27
22	Advanced Gaming Ent	7.189	61
23	Marguerite Dias	7.125	12
24	Rebel Enterprises	7.077	13
25	Vigard Simulations	7.023	11
26	Zorph Enterprises	7.020	54
27	Galactic Simulations	6.964	28
28	Rolling Thunder Games	6.808	65
29	Advent Games	6.710	31
30	Infinite Odysseys	6.667	12
31	Palace Simulations	6.615	13
32	Fantastic Simulations	6.448	67
33	Mindgate	6.308	13
34	Clemens & Associates	5.636	33
35	Quest Games Inc	5.571	21
36	Adventures By Mail	5.356	167
37	Reality Simulations	5.321	168
38	Schubel & Son Inc	5.152	97
39	Pegasus Productions	4.900	90
40	Full Moon Gaming	3.500	13

PBM GAME RATINGS AS OF 5-26-90

The PBM Ratings are ratings on PBM games sent to us by readers and other PBM gamers. The games are rated on the scale of 1 to 9, with 1 being the lowest and 9 being the highest in the ratings. Games listed have a minimum of 10 responses.

Things to consider when rating the games are playability, design, ease of understanding the rules, and ease of understanding game printouts. We have a separate ratings for PBM companies. Only rate the games that you are currently playing. You can update your rating periodically if there are changes in the game. Just send in another rating sheet and we will change the rating on your file.

	GAME	COMPANY	RATING	RESP
1	Fire in the Galaxy	Sar-a-kan Games	8.267	15
2	Adventurer Kings	Ark Royal Gaming	8.250	10
3	Sovereignty	Silvius & Berchtold	7.955	22
4	Legends	Midnight Games	7.816	19
5	Supernova II	Rolling Thunder Games	7.776	63
6	Orion Nebula	Orpheus Publishing Co	7.771	24
7	New Dawn	Marguerite Dias	7.731	13
8	Out Time Days	Twin Engine Gaming	7.717	23
9	Star Cluster Omega	C-T Simulations	7.603	29
10	Star Saga	Infinite Odysseys	7.583	12
11	The Next Empire	Cyborg Games	7.573	65
12	Epic	Midnight Games	7.555	105
13	WW Battle Plan	Flying Buffalo Inc	7.551	47
14	New Order	C2 Simulations	7.500	21
15	Continental Rails	Graaf Simulations	7.444	60
16	Starweb	Flying Buffalo Inc	7.374	143
17	CTF 2187	Advanced Gaming Ent	7.363	40
18	Into Infinity	Battle-Magic Gaming	7.333	18
19	Mobius I	Flying Buffalo Inc	7.332	45
20	Global Supremacy	Schubel & Son	7.235	51
21	Galactic Prisoners	Grandel Inc	7.230	50
22	War 1940	Schubel & Son	7.077	13
23	Kings & Things*	Andon Games	7.076	43
24	Spiral Arm	Graaf Simulations	7.065	42
25	Monster Island	Adventures By Mail	7.024	21
26	Domination	LAMA	7.013	40
27	Swords of the Gods	Galactic Simulations	7.009	28
28	Galactic Power	Vigard Simulations	6.975	10
29	Space Combat	Twin Engine Gaming	6.958	12
30	Alamaze	Pegasus Productions	6.855	105
31	Death & Sorrow	Eckert Gaming Group	6.829	28
32	Quest/Great Jewels	Zorph Enterprises	6.810	54
33	Fleet Maneuvers	Fantastic Simulations	6.717	53
	Family Wars	Andon Games	6.717	30
35	Darkworld	Rebel Enterprise	6.692	13
36	Illuminati	Flying Buffalo Inc	6.677	65
37	Warp Force Empires	Emprise Game Systems	6.652	43
38	The Weapon	Fantastic Simulations	6.633	30
39	Earthwood/Original	Game Systems Inc	6.593	75
40	Rimworlds	Palace Simulations	6.583	12
41	Battle Plan	Flying Buffalo Inc	6.581	36
42	Crack of Doom	Advanced Gaming Ent	6.559	34
43	Empyrean Challenge	Dragonbyte	6.550	13
44	Stars of the Darkwell	Mindgate	6.545	11
45	State of War	Game Systems Inc	6.511	45
46	Xenophobe	Emprise Game Systems	6.500	32
47	Feudal Lords	Graaf Sim & FBI	6.464	105
48	Earthwood/Sea Kings	Game Systems Inc	6.447	38
49	Ad Astra	Dragonbyte	6.421	19
50	Duelmasters	Reality Simulations	6.388	76
51	Galactic Conflict	Flying Buffalo Inc	6.364	11
52	Company Commander	Schubel & Son	6.205	22
53	Beyond the Quadra Zone	Quest Games Inc	6.188	20
54	Nuclear Destruction	Flying Buffalo Inc	6.074	27
55	Hyborian War	Reality Simulations	5.892	125
56	Heroic Fantasy	Flying Buffalo Inc	5.856	87
57	Venom	Game Systems Inc	5.828	39
58	Takamo	Advent Games	5.803	33
59	Starlord	Flying Buffalo Inc	5.678	45
60	Kingdom	Graaf Simulations	5.625	20
61	It's a Crime!	Adventures By Mail	5.462	133
62	The Melding	Kelstar Enterprises	5.200	10
63	Beyond/Stellar Empire	Adventures By Mail	5.103	29
64	Capitol	Adventures By Mail	4.977	22
65	Dawn of the Ancients	Game Systems Inc	4.846	13
66	Dark Blades	Adventure Simulations	4.167	12
67	Realms of Altair	Full Moon Gaming	3.769	13
68	Starmaster II	Schubel & Son	3.071	14

WORLD WAR III: *Twilight: 2000* traces the downward spiral in Europe as regional and ethnic conflict plunge the world into devastation. In the ruins of civilization, the adventures are fast and furious. The prize is survival, and maybe, just maybe, a safe place to spend the night.

CHARACTER GENERATION: *Twilight: 2000* calls for die rolling only for basic attributes (players can opt for a point purchase system instead). Prior career entries are based on minimum attribute scores.

Many Character Types: Character generation includes most nationalities and many nonmilitary backgrounds.

Skills: Skills are based on 1-10 skill levels (instead of the previous 1-100 skill levels). Skills are attribute based; improvement is based on experience. Default skills are available to everyone.

COMBAT: The *Twilight: 2000* advanced combat system is realistic, easy to play, and (above all) fun.

TRAVEL: *Twilight: 2000* covers travel in detail. Rules cover time scales, types of travel available, upkeep, and events. Travel as an introduction to encounters is also described, as are vehicle maintenance, fuel, and repair.

ENCOUNTERS: The new *Twilight* card encounter system emphasizes clearly organized, easy-to-use, short encounters perfect for a night's gaming. Rules cover the *Twilight* card format, creating your own *Twilight* cards, and administering encounters again and again.

Dangerous Environments: The *Twilight* rules cover radiation, disease, and battlefield contaminants.

Twilight Cards: Four typical *Twilight* card adventures are included in the book.

Buildings: Eight typical (and recurring) building interiors are included for use in any number of situations: a bar, subway station, farmhouse, etc.

EQUIPMENT: *Twilight: 2000* has expanded equipment coverage, with a more visual presentation and extensive illustrations. Vehicle statistics are based on up-to-date information and the latest intelligence.

ROLEPLAYING: Referees' responsibilities are spelled out in clear language. More material has been added to help referees in their quest for fast, fun adventures.

Nonplayer characters are carefully defined, with instructions on administering their motivations, describing their characteristics, and playing out their actions.

Rules have been expanded and clarified.

The adventures section gives detailed instructions on how to set them up and describe them.

Plus administering experience, the types of rewards to offer player characters (and how much), and motivating players (and characters) to play out enjoyable adventures.

HAZARDOUS ENVIRONMENTS: The *Twilight: 2000* environment has become more colorful—it's a bigger, wilder, more threatening world out there. Referees can set adventures anywhere in Europe with no additional material. Other areas where U.S. troops are stationed are similarly treated: the Middle East, Far East, and the United States.

Background: The opening situation in *Twilight: 2000* covers Poland, with background and details for a "real" adventure with maps, NPCs, the works. It ends up in Krakow, with a lot of detailed coverage of the city.

Service Background: Military service details are included, with discussions of life in the service, definitions of weird terms (like MOPP, MOS, and klick), and explanations of what equipment is like and what typical character might have experienced.

The New **TWILIGHT: 2000**

The boxed set includes a 288-page basic rule book, 20x28" map of Europe, and blank forms.

